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IMPROVING FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: PROGRESS MADE AND THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

HEARING

BEFORE THE

FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION, FEDERAL SERVICES, AND
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

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HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
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IMPROVING FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: PROGRESS MADE AND THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2007

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT,
GOVERNMENT INFORMATION, FEDERAL SERVICES,
AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY,
OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 3 p.m., in room SD–342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Thomas R. Carper, Chairman of the Subcommittee, presiding.

Present: Senators Carper and McCaskill.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN CARPER

Chairman CARPER. The Subcommittee will come to order. I want to again welcome our two witnesses, General Walker and Ms. Combs. Is it Dr. Combs? I thought so. Dr. Combs. It is not Dr. Walker, is it?

Mr. WALKER. Dr. Dave.

Chairman CARPER. Dr. Dave. [Laughter.]

Mr. WALKER. I have a number of honorary degrees, which means it is Dr. Dave instead of Dr. Walker.

Chairman CARPER. Well, fair enough. We are delighted, whatever titles you bear, that you are here. Thank you for joining us.

Senator Coburn has been in and out. He will be coming back. As I mentioned to our witnesses this afternoon, there has simultaneously been scheduled for this afternoon from 3 o'clock until 4:30 a classified briefing, usually a top-secret briefing, in this case by Secretary of Defense Gates, and the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Peter Pace, over in a classified briefing room that we have in the Capitol. And so a number of our colleagues are there.

In addition, others are on the floor as we debate and prepare amendments to offer to the legislation attempting to carry out the rest of our 9/11 Commission recommendations that have been unfulfilled to date. Our colleagues, will be drifting in and out as their other obligations allow them to do that. In the meantime, we will just proceed.

While he is not here—Joe Lieberman likes to say one of the truest compliments that can be paid to somebody here in this body is if you are praised while you are outside of the room. So while Senator Coburn is outside of the room, I will say some nice things about him. Under his leadership over the last couple of years when I was privileged to serve as the Ranking Member of this Subcommittee, the Subcommittee has been very active. We have had some 50 hearings over that period of time. I just joked with General Walker the other day about him if he got paid by the number of hearings that he testifies before, he would be well paid. But he suggested that maybe a better approach was——

Mr. WALKER. I suggested, Mr. Chairman, if we received 1 percent of our financial benefits, I would rather that go to GAO, and I think we would be rolling in dough.

Chairman CARPER. You probably would.

I am grateful for the leadership that Senator Coburn has provided, and I want to thank his staff, and, frankly, my own small staff, represented today by John Kilvington, for their work and for bringing to light a number of serious financial management challenges that, for whatever reason, many of us here in Congress have not been inclined to spend much time thinking about in the past.

I also want to pledge here today that I will use whatever time I have as Chairman to continue much of the work that we took up in the last Congress. I doubt that we will have as many hearings as we did before, but all of the agencies that are out there thinking that now that Senator Coburn is no longer Chairman they can get off the hot seat for their financial performance should not be thinking that we are going to simply let them off the hook just because Senator Coburn and I have traded places. We are going to continue to be vigilant, and I know he is going to be here sitting next to me to make sure that is the case.

Let me now turn today to the topic that we are going to be examining, that is, the improvements that have been made in Federal financial management in recent years and the challenges that agencies still face in taking better care of the taxpayers' dollars that we entrust to them.

It was not that long ago that observers, including GAO, were telling Congress that financial management was something that just was not a priority in many agencies. Some might say that is still the case, but it is clear, at least to me, that progress has been made.

In 1990, you may recall that Congress passed the CFO Act. That bill for the first time was aimed to set up a qualified, professional, more businesslike financial management leadership structure across our Federal Government. It created the office that Dr. Combs now leads and put a Chief Financial Officer in each of the major Federal agencies. I might add that the lead Republican sponsor of that bill was my predecessor, Senator William Roth.

We have built on the CFO Act significantly since 1990. Today there are CFOs in some 24 agencies under the CFO Act. They file annual audited financial statements, and they are responsible for applying sound financial management and accounting procedures throughout their agencies. More recently, they have also been asked to review their agencies' programs to determine their susceptibility to improper payments and to report each year on any improper payments made and what they plan to do to prevent those improper payments in the future.

The work our predecessors put into the CFO Act and all of the other legislation that followed it has produced results, as has the leadership shown by past Administrations and by the current Administration. OMB reported in its updated Federal Financial Report for 2007 that agencies are now getting their audited financial statements in on time. That is good. Most of them are also getting clean opinions on their financial statements and are cleaning up financial weaknesses identified by auditors, and that we applaud.

However, the work we did in this Subcommittee last year and the testimony before us today tells us that we still have a significant amount of work ahead of us. I like to say everything that I do, I can do better, and that is probably true for all of us.

Financial management in Federal agencies has certainly improved markedly over the years, particularly since 1990. Agencies do look at financial management in a more professional and businesslike manner than they had previously. I would venture to say, however, that the financial management practices in place in some Federal agencies today, even in some of our better ones, might get some of our CFOs fired at a private corporation if they were serving there.

As General Walker will point out in his testimony today, most agencies do not have the ability to present their leadership with the timely and accurate financial information that they need for day-to-day decisionmaking and for performance measurement. Weak internal controls lead to tens of billions of dollars in improper payments each year governmentwide. These and other problems have made it impossible for GAO to even issue an opinion at all on the Federal Government's consolidated financial statements for 10 years running.

Now, the good news is that these problems are all out in the open, and everyone agrees that they exist. And that is no small feat. I suspect that there is also some agreement on how to tackle them, and Senator Coburn and I look forward to continuing to work certainly with our two witnesses today—from OMB and GAO—and other agencies over the next 2 years to find solutions.

Let me just close with something that I think I might have said at a number of our hearings in the last Congress, and I think it probably bears repeating here today. As all of us here know, every taxpayer dollar a Federal agency wastes is a dollar that cannot be used to reduce our Federal budget deficit or a dollar that is not available to spend somewhere else on a worthwhile program. We all have our own ideas about which programs are most worthy of all of our scarce resources. But I believe we can agree that poor financial management, whether it manifests itself through sloppy financial reporting or improper payments, is waste. And in such a fiscally challenging time in our Nation's history, waste is not something we can afford to tolerate.

Before I introduce our witnesses, let me just say we have been bantering back and forth just a little bit. I just finished an opening statement, Senator McCaskill.

We have been joined by our new Senator from Missouri, who is not just a good addition to the U.S. Senate but really a terrific addition to this Committee, and especially to this Subcommittee. In her most recent job working for the people of Missouri, she was their State auditor and, by reputation, quite a good one. And I encouraged her to seek a position on this Subcommittee. I am delighted that she has done that. She is a real auditor and brings a whole lot of expertise, good, and wise counsel to this Subcommittee.

Before I introduce our witnesses, Senator McCaskill, if you would care to make a statement, you are more than welcome to do that. Welcome.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR McCASKILL

Senator McCaskill. Well, thank you, Senator Carper. It is great to be here, and I know that there are probably not a huge number of Senators that are clamoring to get on this particular Subcommittee, but I am thrilled to be here. This is the stuff, I think, that is most interesting and probably in the long run, if we can do better, maybe it is the most important work that can be done in the U.S. Senate.

So I am thrilled to be here and look forward to the testimony and look forward to contributing in any way I can under your important leadership.

Chairman Carper. Thanks so much, and we are thrilled that you are here. It is not a cheap thrill, either. It is a real thrill. We are delighted that you are doing this.

Let me introduce, if I can, Linda Combs first. Dr. Combs was confirmed in June 2005—I remember your confirmation hearing to this day—to serve as the Controller at the Office of Management and Budget and the head of the Office of Federal Financial Management. She has previously served in this Administration as Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs and Chief Financial Officer at the Department of the Transportation and as Chief Financial Officer in the Environmental Protection Agency.

In previous Administrations, Dr. Combs has served in high-level positions at the Department of Education, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of the Treasury. She has also had significant experience in the private sector and a number of public service positions in her home State of North Carolina. She is a graduate of Appalachian State University where her mathematics professor was Starr Stacy, my father-in-law. It is a small world.

David Walker is the seventh Comptroller General of the United States and began his 15-year term in October 1998. As Comptroller General, Mr. Walker serves as head of the Government Accountability Office. David Walker is a certified public accountant, has over 20 years of private sector experience and over 13 years of public service experience. I have no idea where he went to college or whether Starr Stacy was also his math professor. But wherever he went or whoever taught him, he learned a lot because he has brought a whole lot to the table and to the leadership of GAO. We are delighted that he is doing that, and I am going to call on him to offer his statement, and then we will call on Dr. Combs to give her statement, and then we will open it up for some questions. Thank you.

General Walker.

TESTIMONY OF DAVID M. WALKER,[1] COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES, GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

Mr. WALKER. Chairman Carper, Senator McCaskill, it is a pleasure to be here before the Subcommittee to be able to speak on the progress that has been made towards achieving a more results-oriented and accountable Federal Government that exercises proper stewardship over taxpayer resources. I presume, Mr. Chairman, my entire statement will be included in the record, and I will just move to summarize.

Chairman CARPER. Without objection.

Mr. WALKER. Thank you.

Chairman CARPER. You bet.

Mr. WALKER. Since the enactment of key financial management reforms, the Federal Government has made substantial progress in strengthening financial management. Since passage of the CFO Act, as you referred to, every Administration has made financial management reform a top priority. Improving financial management has been one of the cornerstones of President Bush's President's Management Agenda from the outset of the current Administration, and it is a key component of the Executive Branch management scorecard, which tracks the status and progress of agencies. It has also been an effective tool for driving improvement in performance.

For fiscal year 2006, 19 of 24 CFO Act agencies received clean audit opinions on their financial statements, up from just six in 1996. Also importantly, all of these agencies reported within 1½ months after the end of the fiscal year as opposed to 5 months after the end of the fiscal year just a few years ago.

There are six principal challenges remaining to fully realize the Congress' intent through enactment of financial management reform legislation.

First, there is a need to transform financial management and business practices at the Department of Defense. Of the 27 areas on GAO's high-risk list, 15 of 27 relate wholly or partially to DOD, and financial management is one of them.

Second, improvements in financial and performance reporting practices are also needed for the remaining 23 CFO Act agencies so that unqualified opinions on financial statements become routine.

Third, financial management systems must be modernized to provide a complete range of information needed for accountability, performance reporting, and effective decisionmaking.

Fourth, the Federal Government continues to face a myriad of material weaknesses and reportable conditions and internal control which need to be addressed.

Fifth, the Federal financial workforce that supports the business needs of today is not well positioned to support the business needs of tomorrow.

Finally, there are three major impediments that have existed for the entire 10-year period that GAO has been required to perform this annual audit that continue to prevent us from rendering an opinion on the consolidated financial statements of the U.S. Government. They are: First, the deeply rooted, longstanding, and pervasive financial management problems at the Department of Defense; second, the Federal Government's inability to adequately account for and reconcile significant amounts of intragovernmental activity and balances between Federal agencies; and, finally, the Federal Government's ineffective process for preparing the consolidated financial statements.

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[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Walker appears in the Appendix on page 31.

I am confident that the last two of these three can be addressed in a reasonably timely manner. The first one, dealing with the Department of Defense, will take a number of years. Overcoming these six principal challenges will be difficult, but they are all achievable over time.

I think it is important to keep in mind that, in addition to addressing these six challenges, we have made great progress in this area during the past decade, the time has come to step back and to consider the need for further revisions to the current financial reporting model for the Federal Government. There are a number of key questions that I include on page 31 of my testimony that I think need to be asked and answered. All too frequently, people try to force private sector accounting and reporting standards onto our sovereign Nation. In some cases, that makes sense when you are dealing with employer-sponsored benefits like pensions and retiree health care. In some cases, it does not make sense where you are dealing with items like social insurance obligations, which only sovereign nations have and which no employer in their right mind would ever seek to have responsibility for.

Successfully addressing the six primary challenges will undoubtedly help to strengthen the Federal Government's financial and performance reporting, and it will help to resolve many accountability and stewardship challenges that we have. This will become increasingly important because, as I have noted in our latest audit report on the financial statements of the U.S. Government, and given numerous speeches and been involved in a number of town hall meetings in 18 states around the country, our Nation's financial condition is worse than advertised. We face large and growing structural deficits over the longer-term and there is no way we are going to grow out of them. We need to start making tough choices sooner rather than later, because the clock is ticking and time is working against us.

In addition to considering the Federal Government's current financial condition, it is critical to look at other measures of our long-term outlook, and those are noted in the financial report that I recently sent up to every Member of Congress dealing with fiscal sustainability and also noted in our audit report that we issued on our last year's financial statements. I think it is important to keep in mind that we need to engage in a number of actions to improve transparency, to reimpose meaningful budget controls, to re-engineer the base of government, and to engage in certain other activities to put us on a more prudent and sustainable path.

In closing, given the Federal Government's current financial condition and large and growing long-term fiscal imbalance, the need for the Congress and the President to have timely, reliable, and useful financial and performance information is greater than ever.

Sound decisions on the current results and future direction of vital government programs and policies are more difficult, if not impossible in some circumstances, without such information. Until the problems discussed in my testimony are effectively addressed, they will continue to have adverse implications on the Federal Government and the taxpayers. Billions will continue to be wasted.

By the end of my term as Comptroller General, I would like to see the civilian CFO Act agencies routinely produce not only annual audited financial statements that can pass scrutiny, but also quarterly financial statements and meaningful financial and other performance data to help guide decisionmakers make informed decisions on a day-to-day basis. For the Department of Defense, my expectations are not quite as high given their current status. Yet it is realistic for at least major portions of the Department of Defense's financial information to become auditable by the end of my term. Moreover, progress on developing meaningful financial and performance reporting in the Federal Government will be a key area that I will continue to champion. We need key national indicators for the United States—economic, safety, security, social, environmental—in order to be able to make more informed decisions with regard to spending and tax policy and in order to hold people accountable and link resources to results.

I am determined to do whatever I can to try to help make this a reality, to continue to improve in the area of financial management and accountability, and I am dedicated to doing whatever I can to make sure that the baby-boom generation, which is my generation and I imagine yours as well, will not be the first generation in the history of this country to leave it not better positioned for the future, which is where we are headed right now.

Last, and certainly not least, I want to thank this Subcommittee for its past, present, and future efforts. It is vitally important to maintain attention and congressional oversight with regard to this area. This Subcommittee has been committed to doing so in the past, and I am confident, Mr. Chairman, that under your leadership it will remain committed to doing so in the future.

Thank you.

Chairman CARPER. General Walker, thank you for your testimony. Thank you for that last comment especially. And like most things that are successful, there are partnerships that are involved. And certainly Senator Coburn and I have been partners, along with our staff and our colleagues on this Subcommittee. And we regard you very much as a partner in this endeavor. But thank you for your statement.

Dr. Combs.

TESTIMONY OF LINDA COMBS,[1] CONTROLLER, OFFICE OF FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Ms. Combs. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee, I thank you very much for the opportunity today to participate here. I thank you also for your continuing support for our important work, and it is indeed a pleasure to be able to work with people like David Walker and know of the commitment that we all share. I think that the important responsibility that government has to be effective stewards of the taxpayers' money is probably the most important responsibility that any of us could ever undertake, and I am honored to be a part of that.

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[1] The prepared statement of Ms. Combs appears in the Appendix on page 74.

It is certainly no surprise that this President came in and made financial performance improvement one of his top management priorities. With the launch of the President's Management Agenda in 2001, the President issued a call to action for Federal managers to achieve a series of critical financial management goals that, if attained, would help American citizens gauge whether their money, the people's money, is being properly accounted for and wisely spent, increased transparency into the fiscal health of the Federal Government, and provide reliable financial information to be used by Federal leaders to manage the day-to-day operations of the government more efficiently.

With the rising cost of entitlement programs expected to create an unprecedented and enormous fiscal imbalance in the Federal Government in the coming decades, achieving our financial management goals is more critical than ever today, as Mr. Walker just indicated, is more critical than at any other time in our Nation's history, I believe. The fiscal management community is not only responsible for reporting on the extent and nature of our fiscal challenges, it also plays a very critical role in developing and implementing strategies to control Federal spending and otherwise ensure that the fiscal health of the Federal Government remains sound.

I am pleased to report that the Federal financial community is indeed positioned at this point to meet these challenges, having achieved significant forward progress on the key indicators of the President's Management Agenda initiatives related to financial management. And we heard a few minutes ago that 19 of our major agencies representing more than 75 percent of all Federal outlays achieved a clean audit opinion. The number of auditor-reported material weaknesses was reduced by approximately 15 percent, from 48 down to 41, just in 1 year. And for the second consecutive year, every major Federal agency issued their audited financial statements within 45 days of the close of the fiscal year. And as we heard, prior to 2001, some of these major Federal agencies were taking as long as 5 months to complete their financial reports. Improper payments have declined to $36.3 billion for programs that originally reported the $45.1 billion. So that over a couple years represents a $9 billion improvement in over 2 years.

The Federal Government has disposed of more than $4.2 billion in excess real property since 2004. But we indeed have a lot remaining to be done. It is truly now incumbent upon the Federal community to build upon the foundation of progress that we already have built upon, and we need to be prepared and even more prepared to address the challenges that lie ahead of us.

As we set out to achieve new and better levels of financial performance and do so in a cost-effective manner, it is critical that the Federal financial community orient itself around a common set of priorities and agreed-upon plan of action, a clear, consistent road map for improvement. Therefore, pursuant to the Chief Financial

Officers Act of 1990, our office published the 2007 Federal Financial Management Report, "A Framework for Improving Financial Performance," and released it in January of this year, and it indeed is intended to provide the public with a simple report on what we have done with the PMA, what we have done with certain reform activities, and with our core activities as well.

When the CFO Act was signed into law more than 15 years ago, I was here at that time in the Treasury Department——

Chairman CARPER. As an intern?

Ms. COMBS. No. Thank you very much. I wish. [Laughter.]

I am afraid I am one of those baby boomers, too. I responded to numerous financial management challenges at that time, and having been out for over 10 years and then coming back, I remember there was one agency at that time in 1990, probably in 1991, actually, that got a clean opinion on that first year of implementation. By 1996 we had 6, and now we have 19. So while this has not been a revolution, it has been an evolution, and we are headed in the right direction.

But the reform environment that was created by the law and other administrative actions and executive orders provides indeed a solid foundation for continual improvement in the Federal Government's stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

One of the things that we are responsible for and take very seriously is that every single CFO understands their primary goal of meeting certain standards in order to get to the clean audit and resolving the material weaknesses in a timely manner, and implementing and maintaining their strong financial systems that meet these Federal standards. And the President's Management Agenda is a great vehicle that we have used. It is a great tool, and I think Mr. Walker indicated that as well.

We have had a number of agencies that have moved to green in financial management, and they all know that it is very important steps for them to take to get from red to yellow to green. And having been one of those that did it when I was at EPA, it really is very helpful to know that it is certainly a doable activity.

So, in addition to improving financial performance on the Financial Performance Initiative, we have put into the written testimony, which I have submitted for the record, not only some goals that we have right now and what our 2006 results have been, but we have put some targets out there for 2011 as well, because we think it is important to keep striving for good financial management—not now but also in the future. We talk about those reforms and those core activities in this report, and they are, of course, submitted for the record as well.

One of the things that I think is very important is that we move forward toward what I call smarter, stronger, and sustainable accountability. While we have made significant progress since the enactment of the CFO Act in 1990 and we are executing a sound and transparent strategic plan, much still remains to be done before the government can truly say that it has achieved a level of financial management for which we are all striving. As we move forward on our plan, we will increase the reliability and transparency of the government's financial information while placing special emphasis on the principle that our improvement activities must have a positive return on investment for the taxpayer.

To this end, the CFO Council and the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency are currently joining forces to improve the cost-effectiveness of how we go about producing audited financial statements. The presentation of our financial data should be understandable, it should be useful, without becoming an excessive cost or drain on agency resources. The CFOC and PCIE will work together with the larger financial community and the Congress to determine if we are sharing the right information with government stakeholders and if the data are timely and in the right format for decisionmaking.

Every tax dollar is far too precious, Mr. Chairman, for us and for the American taxpayers to take anything for granted on. We must use information to make well-informed decisions, and this Administration looks forward to continuing our partnership with Congress, with the General Accountability Office, and with others to pursue fiscal health by holding agencies accountable, improving financial management through the President's Management Agenda, addressing our long-term fiscal challenges, and striving for stronger, smarter, and sustainable accountability.

We are going to build on our current successes. We are going to maintain and enhance our day-to-day core activities and incorporate a number of reform initiatives that move every agency to financial management excellence.

We believe that we have set certain management priorities that are consistent, that the financial management community agrees upon, and we believe that we are indeed accountable for the wise spending of the people's money. We look forward to your continuing work with us through the initiatives and through the oversight, and we look forward to working with you.

Thank you very much.

Chairman CARPER. Dr. Combs, thank you very much. Thank you both for excellent testimony and for the terrific leadership that you have provided in your current responsibilities, and to the work of those who serve with you in your respective agencies.

I think we will set aside 7 minutes on this first round of questions, and I will take close to that, and then pass it off to Senator McCaskill if Senator Coburn has not returned by that point in time.

When you look at the last 15, 16, or 17 years, in terms of compliance with the 1990 CFO Act, what do you feel especially good about and what do you not feel so good about at this point in time? If you want to start off, General Walker, go ahead, and then Dr. Combs.

Mr. WALKER. First, I think it is clear that across the Federal Government, agencies and the individuals who comprise those agencies are taking financial management much more seriously than was the case in 1990. Nineteen of 24 CFO Act agencies have achieved clean opinions on their financial statements. Annual financial reports are coming out 45 days after the end of the year rather than five or more months after the end of the year. That acceleration has not allowed agencies to engage in heroic measures where they basically re-created the books in order to try to achieve a Pyrrhic victory via a clean opinion on their financial statements 5 or more months after the end of the year, which was obviously not meaningful. So there are a number of positive things.

The biggest concern that I have remains the Department of Defense. The Department of Defense is No. 1 in the world in fighting and winning armed conflicts. Nobody is even close. But they are poor on financial management and in many other business areas.

Now, there are good people there that are taking it seriously. They have a much better plan of action today than they did 2 years ago. They did not have a plan of action when the CFO Act was enacted. They did not want to have a plan of action and, frankly, Congress did not hold them accountable for not having a plan of action. So they are taking it much more seriously, but it is going to take a number of years for them to get to where they need to be. They are a very challenged entity when it comes to financial management.

Chairman CARPER. Alright. Thank you.

Dr. Combs, the same question. Looking back over the last 16, 17 years, what do you feel especially good or proud about with respect to our compliance with and adherence to the law? And where are you especially disappointed?

Ms. COMBS. I could not agree more with General Walker. The thing I am most proud of is to see the caliber of the CFOs that are in the departments and agencies now and how much they have to deal with and how appropriately they deal with it.

I think we have come a very long way in terms of reengineering a lot of our financial processes in order to be able to report within the 45-day period. I think the 45-day period is something I am especially proud of because it drove good management practices throughout the year. As General Walker likes to talk about, it put the CFOs in a position—the CFO Act of 1990 did—from the back room to the board room. This is his term, not mine, but I like to use it because I think it depicts the difference in where we have come over the last 17 years.

But I am especially proud that there is additional oversight. I am especially proud that the internal controls are now in place. The CFOS particularly have done an excellent job. But the biggest concern I have as well is in the Department of Defense. I think their plan is a whole lot better than any we have ever seen. There are some very good people working diligently to make that plan happen. We and General Walker and a lot of other people are continuing to provide oversight as they move forward on that. And I think the transparency that is available today to Congress, to all of us, to the American people, about what is going on in the Federal departments and agencies is good. And it is also something we can continue to work on.

Chairman CARPER. General Walker.

Mr. WALKER. If I can mention one more thing, Mr. Chairman, I think the other thing you have to keep in mind is the Financial Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB), which is the promulgating body for generally accepted accounting principles. The Federal Accounting Standards Board has been in existence for many decades. The Financial Accounting Standards Board has been in existence for quite a while, but not as long as the FASB. The

FASAB has done a great job, I think, in promulgating a lot of authoritative standards in a relatively short period of time.

I am also proud that we are working a lot more effectively together—OMB, Treasury, GAO, and as appropriate, OPM—in looking at Federal financial management on a more strategic, coordinated, and integrated basis, and we are also doing the same thing with the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB), and the Auditing Standards Board, with regard to the auditing standard setting—GAO and those two bodies.

So it is a whole new ball game, and I think there is a lot that we can be proud of. But as you said at the beginning, there is much that remains to be done. It is like a typical GAO report: Progress made, but much remains to be done.

Chairman CARPER. When you look at the agencies that are still struggling to meet their requirements under the 1990 law, the Department of Defense is first and foremost among them. But there are some others as well, and one of them is a fairly new Department, Homeland Security, but just mention for us, if you will, the agencies that still struggle to comply with the law.

Mr. WALKER. Well, as far as the ones that have not achieved a clean audit opinion, which is only one element of the legal requirement, the Department of Defense is by far No. 1; No. 2, the Department of Homeland Security; others include the Department of Energy; the Department of Transportation, primarily because of the challenges associated with the FAA, it is my understanding; and then the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Chairman CARPER. Dr. Combs, does that sound like the right list?

Ms. COMBS. Yes. Those are——

Chairman CARPER. The usual suspects?

Ms. COMBS. Those are the five that I would point to as well. I think one of the things that—if you would like me to elaborate a little bit on some of the things that we are doing with what I consider to be—I call these our "high-risk agencies." We use that term for a lot of things, and it helps with the general accountability, I think, and sensitizes a lot of people with that. And they are high risk for different reasons than some of the other things that we look at. But this is the time when I would like to also especially compliment the staff work that is done by OMB. It is my staff that goes out and meets with them on a very frequent basis and looks at their corrective action plans, demands that they have corrective action plans in place. And a collective effort goes on in OMB, both from the budget side as well as the management side, to make sure that these corrective action plans are taken seriously and that the agencies are making progress.

So using the PMA framework to help hold these agencies accountable for making progress is very good, and the oversight from Congress helps as well.

Chairman CARPER. I am going to ask you to go ahead and finish that thought, and then I need to say something and then yield to Senator McCaskill.

Ms. COMBS. OK. Go ahead.

Chairman CARPER. When I come back for my next round of questions, I am going to return to this point.

You both have used the word “oversight” in terms of the oversight that you exercise, whether at OMB or GAO, with respect to those agencies that still struggle to comply with the 1990 law. I do not know that we have done as much as we can, within this Committee and within this Subcommittee, to exercise our own oversight, particularly on the agencies that we have just mentioned. I am thinking about whether or not we may want to structure a hearing where we invite representatives to come from several, maybe all of these agencies, but also to invite people to come from agencies like the one that you help to lead, Dr. Combs, where you have gone red to yellow to green as you move toward compliance with the law.

I like the idea of putting a spotlight on those that are doing an especially good job in terms of compliance and to sort of contrast it with those who can do better. Thank you.

Senator McCaskill.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, there is a certain irony that this Committee is also home to Homeland Security and the fact that it is one of the high risk, and what I would like to do is talk a little bit about this accountability piece. It is my understanding—and I have not looked at the law specifically yet, but the Improper Payment Information Act of 2002 does not have penalties in it for the people who violate it, civil penalties or criminal penalties. I have begun to ask questions about the Anti-Deficiency Act and what kind of penalties have been extracted from government employees who have violated the Anti-Deficiency Act. And at some point in time, the Department of Defense—and, General Walker, we have had a conversation about this, but when I read my first report, the IG report from DOD on acquisition, and then looked at the GAO report on acquisition at DOD, I was like shocked. I was startled at how bad it is. The idea that there is a culture where it is acceptable that you pay a contract in total before you have signed a contract, the culture where you are parking funds, and the culture where the IG tells you you are violating the Anti-Deficiency Act and then you do it 100 times, clearly something is wrong with the accountability piece. We are failing on accountability, because no one is getting fired, no one is being fined.

In fact, I was told that at DOD that when they go back and look, if they can make the accounting entry to correct it, no harm, no foul.

So if you step back from that, if you are a taxpayer and someone is violating the Anti-Deficiency Act, and then merely once they get caught, if they can go back and correct it with an accounting entry and it is OK, it seems to me we have not deterred much. And I would like, General Walker, for you to talk a little bit about consequences that are ultimately—since we do not have the incredible discipline of a bottom line as it relates to profit in government, the only way that we make government accountable is through your work but, more importantly, if your work—if the next step is taken and people who serve in this body and people who are in charge of these agencies do something to the people that embrace bad business practices. And this kind of throwing up our hands that we cannot do anything about DOD, I mean, I am frustrated. Is this structural or is it cultural?

Mr. WALKER. Thank you for your question, Senator McCaskill.

First, my understanding is there are criminal and civil sanctions for violation of the Anti-Deficiency Act. The question is whether or not they are ever invoked.

Senator MCCASKILL. If you find any, let me know.

Mr. WALKER. I understand.

Senator MCCASKILL. Because I am trying to find one.

Mr. WALKER. You are raising an excellent point. A couple of comments.

For any system to work—a governance system, a tax system, a health care system, whatever—you need to have three things: First, incentives for people to do the right thing, and that does not necessarily mean tax incentives or financial incentives; second, transparency to provide reasonable assurance they will; and, most importantly, what you just said, accountability if they do not do the right thing.

I am sad to say that all too frequently that last one is not there, that when something goes wrong, the persons that are responsible are not held accountable, on a whole range of things, not just with regard to financial matters. Another example that comes to mind is when Congress passed the prescription drug bill and did not consider the long-term cost, the Chief Actuary of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services wanted to tell Congress that the cost of the bill was going to be a lot more than they thought. And that person was told they could not for fear of losing their job. That was not only unethical, it was illegal, and nothing was done about it.

So my view is we have got to change the culture. There is a serious cultural problem, and there have to be rewards when people do a good job, and there have to be consequences when they do not. And whether that be contractors or whether that be civil servants or whether that be uniformed personnel, we need to do a better job at that.

Senator MCCASKILL. Mr. Chairman, maybe this is something we ought to think about doing, too. I know you have some best practices, and do not get me wrong, I do get that the vast majority of people—in fact, probably everybody working in government is not in it for the money. People are not working for the government because they are trying to get rich. But the culture of getting around the rules and the immediate need of what you think is important is more important than the long-term fiscal discipline is really the enemy here. My sense is that is kind of what goes on at DOD, that we can dance around these rules because our cause is noble and what we are doing is so important that these regulations are nothing but a pain in our you know what, and we can figure out ways to get around them because those people do not know what we are doing and we have a noble cause.

Is there someplace that we can take a look at the best practices and who has done it and maybe reach out and hold the hearing that would be very effective to have one panel of the people from the agencies with the best practices, and in the next panel make the other guys listen while we have a panel of the people from

DOD and Homeland Security to listen to and then talk to them about their very bad practices.

Mr. WALKER. If I can, first, picking up on what you said, and Chairman Carper earlier, I sent up 36 items of suggested oversight in November, and one of the things that I included in there was the idea of constructive oversight, which is exactly what the two of you are talking about. It is important to be able to conduct oversight hearings where you take a topic and you highlight people who are doing well.

Senator MCCASKILL. Right.

Mr. WALKER. So that you recognize and reward them and figure out what the best practices are and share them, and then bring up the ones who are not doing as well and to hold them accountable.

Candidly, one of the reasons that DOD has the problems that it has in the area that you talked about with acquisitions is because Congress has not held them accountable either.

Senator MCCASKILL. Right.

Mr. WALKER. They get pretty much whatever money they want, especially in a time of war. So I think Congress has to change some of its behavior as well in this regard.

Senator MCCASKILL. The last thing I would like to ask real quickly, if I could, Mr. Chairman, is about the single audit. Having been responsible for a single audit in my State and knowing the role that the Chairman played in making sure that that legislation came to pass, I understand the efficiencies that are gained by this single audit. But I was thinking about it the other day, how helpful it would be to me now in my capacity to see some kind of compilation of single audits from around the country. I know where we found weaknesses. I know in Missouri the programs that we found where Federal monies were at risk and there was improper conduct in the way that was done. But I do know this: That people who do what I do, it is important to force feed us the information. And I think it would be important—I would like to see results of single audits from across the country, because I think the resonance that would have for members if they saw that in their own State—and I bet most of the members of the Missouri delegation do not even know what the single audit is, to tell you the truth.

Mr. WALKER. Sure. First, it is my understanding there is a database, and this is something that I think would provide a basis to do that analysis. My personal view is the Executive Branch ought to do that. As you know, these single audit reports go to the Executive Branch. But I think it is a great idea. I think it is something that is desirable to be done.

I chair the Intergovernmental Audit Forum, as you know, which is Federal, State, and local auditors, as well as the IGs. We also have a domestic working group of some thought leaders in the accountability community nationally and globally. So if that was done, we could use those mechanisms to try to help share that information through the community.

The last thing, on the issues of acquisitions and contracting, there are two angles. One is best practices, which I agree ought to be pursued. The other is I have identified—my very capable staff at GAO have identified 15 systemic acquisition and contracting problems at the Defense Department. We know what the problems are.

Senator MCCASKILL. Right.

Mr. WALKER. We know what needs to be done. And there needs to be much more focus on addressing those because we are talking billions and billions of dollars every year.

Senator MCCASKILL. People think that $12 billion in cash missing in Iraq is the problem. They have no idea how big the problem is.

Mr. WALKER. Right, and that, as you know, was Iraqi money, which we had a fiduciary responsibility over, so we should still be concerned about it. It was not U.S. taxpayer money, but we should be concerned about it.

Chairman CARPER. Thank you.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you.

Chairman CARPER. Thank you very much.

A question for Dr. Combs, and then I am going to ask, General Walker, if you care to comment, please do. While agencies are getting their audited financials submitted in a more timely manner, I understand there has been a problem at least with some agencies needing to restate their statements later on down the line to address problems that they uncover after submission. And that is probably not entirely surprising, but I think some of these restatements involve fairly significant amounts of money.

I would just ask any thoughts that you might have on these restatements.

Ms. COMBS. Mr. Chairman, may I take a privilege for just one moment before I talk about restatements——

Chairman CARPER. Sure.

Ms. COMBS [continuing]. To let Senator McCaskill know that I chair the CFO Council, the Chief Financial Officers Council, and there is right now a joint project going on between the CFO Council and the PCIE, which are all of the Inspector Generals, on the single audit. And I welcome your involvement. You will be a great person for us to reach out to on that. But I did want to just take the privilege, if you did not mind, of letting you know that.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you.

Ms. COMBS. Thank you.

Chairman CARPER. We talked earlier, when I introduced Dr. Combs, about how she is a graduate of Appalachian State University, where my father-in-law was a math professor, physics professor, for 40 years and happened to be one of her professors. A small world.

And another small world, I think the House sponsor of the Single Audit Act was me.

Ms. COMBS. Right.

Chairman CARPER. And the person who probably knows the most about it in the Senate, certainly in the Congress today, is Senator McCaskill.

Ms. COMBS. Well, between your father-in-law and me and Senator McCaskill and you, we have just got the world wrapped right here today, don't we?

Senator MCCASKILL. Just don't make me talk about physics. [Laughter.]

Ms. COMBS. Back to restatements, OK. One of the things that I am proud of is that the number of restatements is continuing to decrease. I think we had something like 11 restatements in 2003, and I think we have gone from maybe seven in 2004 down to three in 2005 that were restated in 2006. And you are exactly right that there are—some of these sometimes the magnitude is great, and it is definitely——

Chairman CARPER. Give us some idea when you say "great." Just a rough idea.

Ms. COMBS. The State Department, for example, I think, had a restatement of something like $160 million.

Chairman CARPER. That is "great."

Ms. COMBS. And that is "great," and so it is a concern. The General and I have talked about this on occasion before. It is definitely a concern. And I think the more we work on our internal controls, the more we root out those internal deficiencies in our financial processes, the less serious these are going to become. But it is troublesome. It is a concern to us as well.

Chairman CARPER. Alright. General Walker, any comment?

Mr. WALKER. If I can, Mr. Chairman, first, we issued a Kaplan report in October 2006 dealing with restatements. We made a number of recommendations to OMB, which I know they are looking at, among other things, as to how guidance might be able to be improved in this area.

The other thing that we have done recently, which I know Senator McCaskill will be familiar with, is that we have updated the Yellow Book, which is generally accepted governmental auditing standards, and one of the things that we have done is we have made it clear that when there is a restatement of a prior-year financial statement, the auditor has a responsibility to note in their audit report that because of that restatement, that had they been aware of that in the prior year, they would not have received a clean opinion.

I think one of the things that I would respectfully suggest that OMB needs to think about in connection with the President's Management Agenda is if somebody has a restatement of their prior-year financial statements, by definition that means it is material, it is significant, or else you would not do a restatement. You should not be able to be green.

One of the concerns that I have is that sometimes people want to present, well, gee, I got a clean opinion last year, I got a clean opinion this year, but I had to restate last year's financial statements. Well, it means you should not have gotten a clean opinion last year. And we have made that clear, that the auditors now have that affirmative responsibility to make that clear in their audit report. And I would ask that OMB think whether and to what extent that should affect how people are rated on the President's Management Agenda for transparency and accountability purposes.

Chairman CARPER. Yes. Dr. Combs, do you want to respond to that thought?

Ms. COMBS. Obviously, it is a concern, and one of the things that we have to continue to look at is agencies and their audit on their balance sheet and their overall audit. And as we have talked about this movement that we have made from 1990 to now, we are still evolving over the course of how we do business. I think it is really important that we hold those green standards up there, and it is obvious that we are being very strict because we do not have but nine agencies right now that are green in financial management.

I think it is more important for us to encourage these departments and agencies to root out these deficiencies rather than slapping them on the hand if they do something wrong. Some of these restatements would be material. Some of them would not. And I think we have to handle that on a case-by-case basis. But we are looking at the report.

Mr. WALKER. I would just say, if it is not material, you do not necessarily have to restate, by definition. You may choose to restate, but you are not required to restate.

Chairman CARPER. Good. I am going to yield again to Senator McCaskill, but I want to telegraph my next pitch—a year or two ago, Senator Coburn and I held a field hearing. I am trying to think, was it Chicago? Where was it? Yes, it was in Chicago. We visited a Postal Service facility, right across the street from a very large, long-abandoned postal processing plant that the Postal Service was spending a whole lot of money to maintain. And we learned at that hearing that there were a number of similar situations in other agencies where that kind of thing happens. In fact, in some agencies, they do not even know what property they own, let alone know what they are paying to keep them up.

I want to come back in my next round and explore that. I think, Dr. Combs, you mentioned how much money that agencies had recovered collectively in the last several years on the sale or disposal of surplus property. I want to just talk about how we do better.

Alright. Senator McCaskill.

Senator MCCASKILL. This may be a little bit touchy because the subject is a little touchy, but one of the things that I have tried to focus in on is the way that the budget is put together and the way that appropriations actually come to pass in Congress. I would welcome either one of your comments about the whole earmarking process and the lack of accountability that there is, and from a financial management standpoint what kind of example we should be setting in the Senate. It is kind of hard for me to get too righteously indignant and pound my fist on the table about DOD and some of their practices if we—and it is my understanding—and correct me if I am wrong, but by virtue of the way these are done, there has to be basically sign-off by the agency for the earmarks, that the agency does not have to honor the earmarks.

And so from the Executive Branch's perspective, if the earmarks do not have to be honored, why is the Executive Branch honoring them? Why isn't the Executive Branch saying to the agency heads, don't do it, don't fund these projects that are being put in the bills without appropriate authority through either the authorization or appropriation process? And, certainly, do you all have a sense of where all these earmarks are and what they are? And is there a reason why we are having to work so hard with S. 1 to make them transparent? Why can't they be made transparent from the agency?

Mr. WALKER. First, not all earmarks are good, and not all earmarks are bad.

Senator MCCASKILL. Right.

Mr. WALKER. Transparency is a powerful force, and I believe that clearly there needs to be more transparency with regard to earmarks. And I would respectfully suggest you probably want more transparency with regard to earmarks before they are enacted into law, because once they are enacted into law, the decision is already made.

Second, merely because you have an earmark does not mean that you have increased spending, and merely because you eliminate an earmark does not mean you have decreased spending, because what an earmark does is it says that for the amount of money that has been appropriated, you must spend X amount for Y purpose. And sometimes those earmarks can be waste because you are directing an agency to spend part of their appropriation for a purpose that might not stand the light of the day, might not pass a cost/benefit test from the standpoint of value and risk.

My understanding is that if it is in the statutory language, then agencies are supposed to follow it. But many times they are not in the statutory language. They are in the conference reports or whatever else. And as you mentioned before, Senator McCaskill, a lot of times people do things because of culture and because of longstanding practice rather than because they have to do it by law.

My understanding is that many earmarks are not statutory. They are in the conference report or other instruction language. But there has been a longstanding practice on behalf of many agencies to follow it as an accommodation to the Congress. At the same point in time, they are also concerned that if they do not follow it, what might happen to the appropriation the next year.

We believe more transparency is needed here up front, and one of the things that people talk about from time to time is line item vetoes. The Supreme Court has struck that down as unconstitutional. But I think one of the things that Congress ought to be considering in the area of fiscal responsibility is allowing for a line item rescission, an expedited line item rescission that would be subject to an up or down majority vote by the Congress, a simple majority, so it is not a veto, simple majority as a supplement to this.

The last thing, one of the concerns about earmarks is—and, again, they are not all bad, they are not all good—is that when you are talking about a time of constrained resources, if the top line is getting more constrained with regard to what your budget is, the worst of all worlds is where you get more earmarks telling you what to do with a limited amount of money, where those earmarks may not be based upon value and risk. That is a very high-risk strategy.

Senator MCCASKILL. Let me make sure I understand, though. So the earmarks that are—the ones that I kind of affectionately say the ones that get there through the secret knock, like if you know the knock—it is not written in the bill. It is in the conference report. There is nothing in the law that keeps the President from directing agencies not to fund those, correct?

Ms. COMBS. That is correct, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Rob Portman, has recently issued a letter basically saying that.

Senator McCASKILL. I am a little disappointed that only came after November of last year, that directive only came then. It seems to me that if these earmarks are not required by law and if the President is going to include in his State of the Union speech how bad the earmarks are, it seems to me that the Executive Branch has an obligation not to fund those projects that have, in fact, not been put into the law but that are, in fact, discretionary on the part of the Executive Branch. And I do not think the American people even understand how that works. Frankly, I am having trouble figuring out how it all works.

Mr. WALKER. I have asked my staff to prepare a special publication on earmarks to help people understand what they are and what they are not, because I think there is a lot of confusion here. And, it is something that I think we could help to try to be able to help people better understand this area.

Senator McCASKILL. I think it would be great, and I think, candidly that if we did that—and as you say, transparency is the key here. Certainly the more quickly that we quit using that term for projects that are authorized and appropriated, the better, because now it has gotten a connotation that it is a bad thing. And it is not. I mean, we need to be investing Federal dollars in infrastructure and, I would argue, higher education at public universities—I have not seen a whole list. I have seen a partial list. There is some stuff on there that I think if it was public, they would not happen.

Mr. WALKER. The other thing is that on the issue of earmarks with regard to financial reporting, one of the things that I have recently sent a note to the chairman of the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board is that they ought to rethink the terms that they are using for financial reporting, because in financial reporting, there is separate reporting for so-called earmarked revenues. Now, what "earmarked revenues" means, it means things like payroll taxes and Social Security, premiums for Medicare.

Senator McCASKILL. Right.

Mr. WALKER. Things where they are designated for a particular purpose. Well, the word "earmark" does not have a positive connotation.

Senator McCASKILL. People are going to get confused. Right.

Mr. WALKER. Whereas, in this context, it is really more restricted funds, if you will, or at least they are supposed to be restricted. But as we know, Congress spends all the Social Security surplus. That is a whole different topic we can get to.

Senator McCASKILL. Maybe we should call it "hope they are restricted."

Mr. WALKER. Yes.

Senator McCASKILL. They ought to be restricted.

Mr. WALKER. Well, it ought to be restricted, or at a minimum, one of the things that does not happen right now dealing with Federal financial management reporting, the bonds that are in the Social Security and Medicare trust funds, which are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government, which are guaranteed as to principal and interest, are not considered to be liabilities of the U.S. Government. And that is just dead wrong, and that ought to change, and we are trying to get that changed.

Senator MCCASKILL. Goodness gracious.

Ms. COMBS. I was just going to add that we are all working, I think, for the right goal here, which is to make Federal spending more transparent in every way. Transparency and accountability to the public is what we are all about.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman CARPER. Thank you.

I do not recall with great specificity how our first bill, S. 1, the ethics bill, addresses earmarks. But as I recall, there is some language in there that gets to the issue of transparency, and in a very good, positive, and constructive way.

Ms. COMBS. Right.

Chairman CARPER. So it is important that what comes out of the conference report, the compromise version of the House and Senate bill, also is strong in that regard.

I want to just follow up briefly before we turn to some of this excess Federal property and how to deal with that. General Walker mentioned the notion of enhanced rescission powers and something that I call "statutory line item veto powers." In the early 1990s, the House of Representatives actually adopted a measure providing for enhanced rescission powers to the President. It is kind of interesting. Senator McCaskill said that, as you probably know now, the President has the right to propose rescissions to rescind spending that has been appropriated, but the budget can and usually chooses just to ignore it.

And the legislation we passed by about a 3:1 margin in the House of Representatives in 1991 or 1992 restricted somewhat what the President could rescind. If programs were fully authorized, he could rescind no more than, I think, 25 percent. If programs were not authorized, his ability to propose rescissions was unlimited. But the Congress had to vote on the rescissions. The President had to submit them within a certain amount of time. The Congress then had to vote on them, up or down within a certain amount of time. And rather than having a two-third required vote to override the President's rescission, it was simple majority, 51 in the Senate, 218 in the House. And it passed by a big margin in the House of Representatives. It died in the Senate and did not come up for a vote here. The House and Senate subsequently passed legislation that was deemed to be unconstitutional.

The other thing that was different about the House version was there was a 2-year test drive, as I recall. The President got the authority for 2 years. If he or she abused the authority and used it to intimidate House Members or Senators, the President would probably lose that authority.

So, anyway, I think we are going to revisit that issue. There is probably going to be legislation proposed by the author of the House bill, proposed by the same person who is now a Senator, and might want to work with you to see if it is something you would be interested in working with us on.

Let me come back to the surplus property. It is actually real money, and we are not just talking about a couple million dollars or tens of millions of dollars or hundreds of millions of dollars. I think, Dr. Combs, you indicated that the amount of money that had been recovered from disposing of surplus property was several billion dollars over the last couple of years. And I think one of the goals that you may have laid out in your revised financial report for fiscal year 2007 is a sell-off of at least $11 billion in Federal property between now and, I think, 2011. That is a laudable goal, but I am just not sure how we get there.

Let me just ask, do you think that agencies have the incentives that they need to sell, whether it is vacant buildings or other surplus properties?

Ms. COMBS. I like to use the word “disposal” of the properties, because some of them may not result in sales. But we have had a terrific effort going on across the Federal agencies through the real property community, and agencies have been very eager to participate in the management and planning of how this is best handled. And the Executive order that was issued on Federal Real Property Asset Management defined pretty clearly some common standards for defining specific data elements, including what performance measures are being used. And there is an inventory now for the first time of performance data that captures more than 1.2 million assets governmentwide. And when we use the key data elements such as condition and utilization and agencies have identified and defined whether or not these properties are no longer necessary to meet their agency mission and they are prioritizing those assets for condition improvement or whether they are actually needed at all or not, we come up with something like a replacement value right now of something like $1.2 trillion.

Chairman Carper. Is that trillion with a “T”?

Ms. COMBS. With a “T.” So you can see that there is a lot of opportunity out there to do the right thing, and our goal for disposing of 11 billion of those properties by 2011 could be through sale, could be through demolition, could be through a public transfer from one entity to another.

I think the mere fact that we have disposed of more than 4.2 billion over the last couple of years says that surely by 2011 we can get to the 11 billion. And I think what it is going to take to get us there is this continuing focus that we now have where we actually continue to push agencies and departments who have the asset management plans in place now to continue to work toward the goals that are set out there.

We have green standards. The progress that people are making on this is monitored through the PMA scorecard. And as you recall, the President’s 2008 budget actually includes a real property disposal pilot that would do what Mr. Walker talked about a while ago and set up some incentives for these agencies to retain part of the proceeds; 20 percent of the proceeds would be retained, and 80 percent of those proceeds then would go to the Treasury.

I think there are some things that we can do together as we move forward on this.

Chairman CARPER. Good. General Walker, do you want to talk a little bit more about those incentives? I think if you run a Federal agency, you have this surplus of unused property, and you know if you dispose of it, you do not get any proceeds, it does not help you do your jobs any better, meet your mission any better, there is not a great incentive to do anything about it.

Mr. WALKER. Well, several things. As you know, Mr. Chairman, we have excess Federal real property on our governmentwide high-risk list, and this is something that we have added in recent years. It is clearly a major challenge. There are billions of dollars involved. It is not just the issue of saving unnecessary expenses, but it is also realizing revenues from these properties, and also in many cases facilitating redevelopment and better utilization of this property by the local communities, if you will.

I do believe that, coming back to what we talked about before, we need incentives, transparency, and accountability. Now, there are two incentives that theoretically they have. If they are expending parts of their appropriation to try to maintain and secure these buildings, then to the extent they get rid of it, they will not have to use those funds. But it would be nice if they could have another financial incentive where they might be able to keep a piece of the proceeds as a further incentive for people to be able to do the right thing. And in the end, you may have to think of some type of BRAC type process because I would imagine that some of these may be ones that there might be some controversy associated, although there should be less here. There should be less here because in many cases, as you mentioned, in Chicago I have seen that facility more than once. It is an abandoned, very large facility, almost an entire, if not an entire city block in downtown Chicago. I have to believe that is probably worth some money.

Chairman CARPER. A big building, you are right.

There are a number of references in your testimony, General Walker, and I believe in previous GAO work, about agencies with troubled financial management systems. Is this a reference to IT systems or to basic accounting and management procedures? What are agencies doing wrong in this area?

Mr. WALKER. There are a number of challenges with regard to information systems and security associated with information systems. There are a number of agencies that have material weaknesses dealing with such matters. I imagine that is probably what that refers to.

Chairman CARPER. OK. Senator McCaskill, let me yield to you if you would like to ask some more questions, and I may have one more round, and we will wrap it up.

Senator MCCASKILL. Do you have any suggestions I would appreciate them to my office. I am also on the Armed Services Committee along with Homeland Security, so I have got a great opportunity to ask questions. And one of the things I have tried to do is figure out what percentage of the purchasing that is going on at DOD—and I have not had an opportunity to ask this of Homeland Security yet—what percentage of it is competitive. And I am having a hard time with DOD because they are—it appears that different people at DOD have a different version of what is and what is not competitive.

Have you, General Walker, ever tried to help Congress and all of the Executive Branch in defining what is a competitive purchase and what is not? And I certainly would appreciate any, along those same lines about competitiveness, requests for proposals as it relates to professional services and the "very scary world of consultants."

Mr. WALKER. First, I do not recall off the top of my head, Senator, as to whether or not we have done work in defining the term "competitive." I will go back, find out, provide it to your office.

I do know that this is an example of something that we were recently asked to do—and maybe we should do it here. I was recently asked to come up with a definition of "waste," and I did, in conjunction with the Inspector General of Defense, the Inspector General of State, and the Special Inspector General of Iraq, because it came up in the context of a hearing on Iraq contracting. And I did, and I will be happy to provide it for the record, because it is interesting and it is informative, because it is acts of commission and omission by both the Executive Branch, contractors, and the Legislative Branch in circumstances where the taxpayers do not get value for money, and I give specific examples. By the way, some earmarks could fall into the category of waste, but not all earmarks would fall into the category of waste. And I will be happy to provide that to your office and anything else that I can find out on the other.[1]

And if I may for the record, while you are both here—because I know you are getting short on time—I would like to make a pitch—and I will send it to both of your offices. We are trying to work with a number of interested parties, including members on both sides of the aisle and both ends of the Hill, to push potential legislation for transparency and accounting and budgeting. There is a clear need for more transparency here, and I would like to be able to have permission to send that to your offices and to be able to talk to you about it.

And the second thing is with regard to our Nation's financial and fiscal condition, I was just advised by CBS News that there will be a special segment in "60 Minutes" this weekend—the lead segment, I believe—on the work that we at GAO and others have been doing to try to help educate the public for the need for dramatic and fundamental reforms in order to put our Nation on a more prudent and sustainable fiscal path.

Senator MCCASKILL. That is great because I think the more the public understands the train wreck is coming, the more political elbow room we will have in Congress to do the right thing.

On the competitiveness—this is Homeland Security, the Coast Guard boat—I forget the name of it.

Mr. WALKER. It is Deepwater.

Senator MCCASKILL. Deepwater.

Mr. WALKER. The Deepwater project, which is a number of different platforms.

Senator MCCASKILL. Deepwater, but then you look over at DOD and some of the weapons systems, and what they are saying to me is, well, if you begin the process with competitiveness, then once you pick someone to build the system, then we are getting banged for it not being competitive when in reality it was competitive at the beginning, but it does not make sense fiscally for it to continue to be competitive.

I am trying to figure out how we provide oversight under those circumstances, because, first of all, it is hard to say with authority, if you either are not an auditor who has a lot of experience in looking at those systems and how that works or unless you actually have working knowledge of the weapons systems, and I do not think most of us around here do. So that competitiveness, particularly at DOD, I think, aside from the part they do not know what is being bought competitively with interagency contracting—which they do way too much to avoid the rules as opposed to find efficiencies. That is why I really would like to see some clarification from GAO as to what you consider competitive.

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[1] The information provided by Mr. Walker appears in the Appendix on page 82.

Mr. WALKER. Well, Senator, I think it probably makes sense for me to come up to your office and talk to you about a number of these issues. I can tell you that based upon the information that I have seen, a significant majority of the major contracts are competitive at some point in time. Sometimes, for example, when you have a contingency operation—and by that I mean it could be Iraq, it could be Hurricane Katrina. You have an unexpected catastrophic event or a contingency operation. You can see circumstances in which initially they may not be competitive, but then later on they are competed.

In most circumstances, for major weapons systems they are competed. The problem is not as much that as it is we are trying to buy wants versus needs; we are not nailing down what we are expecting to get. We are trying to push things too quickly, and we are paying bonuses in circumstances where we are not—where we are over budget, behind schedule, and not getting results. And I would love to be able to sit down with you and talk to you because I think you are extremely well positioned, being on the Armed Services Committee as well as Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, to be able to address some of these challenges that can save the taxpayers a lot of money.

Senator MCCASKILL. When you all classify improper payments, are you including bonuses paid within contracts where any objective analysis would say the contract has not been performed well?

Mr. WALKER. Well, we are not the ones that classify whether or not they are improper payments. In my opinion, that is not appropriate, but I doubt very seriously that it is being classified as improper.

Senator MCCASKILL. Who is classifying improper payments?

Mr. WALKER. The Executive Branch is.

Ms. COMBS. The Executive Branch does that.

Senator MCCASKILL. And is that included in your classification of improper payments when bonuses are paid on a contract where any cursory look at the requirements of the contract would see that it had not been met?

Ms. COMBS. Contracting is looked at, and I am not sure that specific example in every case would be looked at. But, one of the things that we would offer, too, as well, is the opportunity to work with you. Our office is at the Office of Management and Budget. Obviously, in addition to the improper payments, we have folks there who stress competition in procurement in our policies, and our policies do address many of those things. And I am sure those specialists would be more than happy to come and work with you as well.

Senator MCCASKILL. That would be great. Thank you.

Mr. WALKER. Of the ones that I am familiar with, for example, one of the things that we do that for I know you are going to be interested in, we do once a year a quick look report that talks about the status of major weapons systems on cost, timing, and quality. We have also done reports on the payment of incentive and award fees.

Senator MCCASKILL. Right.

Mr. WALKER. And we can make that available for your office, and we will do that. Of the ones that I am familiar with, they were not categorized as improper payments because they were not illegal, they were not inconsistent with the contract terms, but in my view, they were in many cases inappropriate.

Senator MCCASKILL. But if they are inconsistent with the contract terms, if the contract says you do A, B, and C, and if you do, you get a bonus, and they do not do A, B, and C and they get a bonus, it seems to me we ought to be classifying that as improper payment.

Mr. WALKER. But, Senator, the problem is that is not what the contract says. The contract all too frequently says "best efforts," and "cost plus." The government ends up not being very clear to the contractor as to what you want by when, and the government many times ends up changing the terms or the requirements, which that is why I look forward to sitting down with you.

Senator MCCASKILL. I see.

Mr. WALKER. It is a shared responsibility. It is not just the contractor. It is also the government. And it is a lot of money.

Ms. COMBS. And if there are duplicative payments or payments for services that were not rendered, those indeed would be classified.

Senator MCCASKILL. I am going to try to see if we cannot get that other kind in there.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman CARPER. You bet.

Senator MCCASKILL. I unfortunately have to leave you now. I have to go to the floor.

Chairman CARPER. Before you walk out, let me just mention one thing because it pertains to what you have just been asking in having this discussion. The notion of us paying bonus payments to contractors for weapons systems that did not then meet the terms of expected performance seems foolish and anathema to me.

My colleague from Delaware, Congressman Mike Castle, and I offered language to, I believe, the defense appropriations bill last fall, adopted in the House version, adopted in the Senate version—I believe it is now law of the land—that says that bonus payments cannot be paid to weapons contractors for projects that do not meet the terms of the mandated level of performance.

I would just ask for the record if maybe Dr. Combs could just let us know how that law is being implemented and made effective. I know it was adopted by the House and Senate. I am almost positive it survived the conference, and I would just like to know how it is working. If you could submit that, that would be great.

Ms. COMBS. We will be glad to get back to you on that.[1]

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[1] The GAO report submitted for the record appears in the Appendix on page 84.

Chairman CARPER. Good. Thank you.

Senator MCCASKILL. Thank you.

Chairman CARPER. I can just say, this is your first hearing with us here, Senator McCaskill. I think you are going to be a valuable Member of this Subcommittee. And you know what? I think you are going to enjoy it.

Senator MCCASKILL. I had fun.

Chairman CARPER. That is good. Thanks for joining us today.

Two more questions, and then I am all finished, and any last comments you all have would be appreciated.

Dr. Combs, General Walker, I think, argues in his written testimony that the Financial Management Workforce—in at least some agencies—sometimes does not have the skills that are necessary to meet future needs. I am sure that many on the Financial Management Workforce are close to retirement as well, just like many of our best people in other areas across the Federal Government. In the U.S. Senate, they are never close to retirement. We serve here seemingly forever. But what steps has OMB taken in partnership with the agencies that you oversee to find solutions to this problem?

Ms. COMBS. I could not agree more with the Comptroller General on this important issue, and I know this is something he has spoken out on for many years, and it certainly continues to deserve our careful look.

There are some added advantages for us looking at this issue because when I talked about smarter accountability in my statement earlier, if we continue to take more cost-effective approaches and continue to work through a number of things that would help our workforce, we keep coming back to how can we standardize things so that we can use people across agencies and in the entire Federal workforce in financial management.

Right now, because things are not as standardized as we would like them, one person in a financial management capacity cannot necessarily just pick up and move to another financial management job. So that would help tremendously to optimize the workforce that we currently have.

We have reached out to various colleges and universities, folks like the AGA——

Chairman CARPER. What is AGA?

Ms. COMBS. Association of Governmental Accounting.

Chairman CARPER. Are those Aggies? No. [Laughter.]

Ms. COMBS. And we have looked to have them help us develop more effective training and recruitment programs, too, because it is not just training the people that are here who are now maybe two or three levels below the number of baby boomers that we are about to lose. They need to be retrained in various skills. But we also need to recruit some MBA type people who need to be able to take on these larger roles and responsibilities.

So we have looked and we talk with the private sector on a monthly basis. We have a CFO that comes to the CFO Council meeting, which I chair, and these people are from the Fortune 500 companies. Invariably, they say the same thing that David Walker and Linda Combs are saying to you. They have the same serious problems of filling their financial management workforce as well.

So it is not just a government problem. It is also an industry problem. And because industry has some added advantages that they can have relating to other incentives they can offer in terms of salary or many other things, we often come up short in the Federal Government.

Chairman CARPER. Alright.

Mr. WALKER. Can I add something?

Chairman CARPER. General, go ahead.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Chairman, there are serious workforce challenges in the Federal Government, and those challenges are particularly acute in several areas: Financial management, acquisitions, information technology, human capital strategy, and also certain science and engineering fields. I think that this Committee, meaning Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, as well as your House counterpart, really needs to take a look into that particular area and what, if anything, needs to be done in order to try to address these serious challenges, which are only going to get worse with the passage of time, in part because of supply and demand imbalances.

You are only as good as your people, and we have great people that are very dedicated, but we have got a lot of them who are going to be leaving, and we do not have enough of them.

Ms. COMBS. Correct.

Chairman CARPER. That are going be leaving?

Mr. WALKER. No, we do not have enough. [Laughter.]

Mr. WALKER. That is not what I intended but thank you for clarifying.

Chairman CARPER. I just wanted to clarify that point.

Final question, and this is for Dr. Combs, and if you want to comment on it, General, that would be fine. But I know that OMB has been working on an initiative to consolidate certain financial management functions into something—I think they are called "shared service centers," I assume in agencies or divisions of agencies that do a better job than others in managing their money.

What do you hope that this initiative will accomplish? How will it address some of the remaining challenges in financial management that both you and General Walker agree need to be addressed?

Ms. COMBS. I think shared service arrangements have been around for a while, and they perform a vital function within the government itself. I think one of the things that a shared servicing arrangement does, it helps us to take something that a government entity does especially well and optimize what they are doing already and doing it very well and sharing it, in essence, with other government entities.

We also now have some private sector entities that have taken on certain roles and responsibilities that CFO offices are happy to shed from them, that they do not have to do these things directly. One of the first arrangements in this Administration had to do with payroll. As you recall, we went from 19 systems down to three payroll systems. That was an example of a shared service arrangement.

We are trying to further embark into what are the shared services—or what are the services that do not need the immediate attention but they need the oversight of the CFO. So the goal is to shed some of the responsibilities from the CFO offices directly and let somebody else perform those routine duties. And we have come a long way with doing that, but we have a long way yet to go.

Chairman CARPER. OK. General Walker, any concluding comment on that point?

Mr. WALKER. No. I think that is fine, Mr. Chairman. That is an Executive Branch responsibility. I do think it makes sense to try to encourage shared service arrangements where possible for economies of scale, consistency, and a variety of other reasons.

Ms. COMBS. I think the other thing that is important to note here is, again, what we have learned from our CFO Council meetings and the CFOs that we talk to in the corporate world, is they are doing that model themselves, because they realize that with those economies of scale, that they can take that footprint that they have—that is costing them money and having that work more effectively.

In fact, my staff just reminded me that one of——

Ms. COMBS. They are very good. They do not want me to miss anything.

One of the things that we were especially pleased to have was a CFO from DuPont last week at our CFO Council meeting. He was very effective. And so being from Delaware, I thought you would appreciate that.

Chairman CARPER. That is good to hear. And we had the CEO of the company here just this past month talking about U.S. Climate Action Partnership that the Dupont Company and a number of other big companies, utilities, and environmental groups have sort of joined together to try to encourage us to get started on climate change in ways that are cost-effective and will not torpedo the economy and will not cost consumers an arm and a leg. It was just very constructive, so thanks for mentioning them.

Let me just close by thanking you on behalf of Dr. Coburn and myself and Senator McCaskill and others for being here today. Thank you for the testimony that was prepared and presented. Thank you for the gravity with which you approach these issues. This is not the first time that you have testified before this Subcommittee. It will not be the last time, I hope we will have the opportunity to talk with you both on-line and off-line and to continue this work.

When you are a country as big as ours and you are running a huge budget deficit, and as we look ahead and our generation, the boomers, prepare to retire, we know that there is going to be enormous stress on our budgets and our ability to pay for things. And to the extent that we can identify ways to save some money, a lot of money, we will be better off as a country and as a people.

I would say that the hearing record is going to be open for, I think, 2 weeks for submission of additional statements and questions. I would just ask our witnesses and your staffs for your cooperation in making sure that we get prompt responses to any questions that are submitted for the record.

This hearing is adjourned. Again, my thanks to each of you.

[Whereupon, at 4:40 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

United States Government Accountability Office

GAO

Testimony

Before the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate

For Release on Delivery
Expected at 3:00 p.m. EST
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FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Critical Accountability and Fiscal Stewardship Challenges Facing Our Nation

Statement of David M. Walker
Comptroller General of the United States

GAO
Accountability * Integrity * Reliability

GAO-07-542T

G A O

Highlights

[illegible]

Why GAO Did This Study

[illegible]

[illegible]

What GAO Recommends

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

March 1, 2007

FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

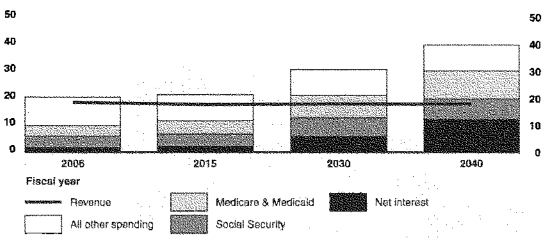
Critical Accountability and Fiscal Stewardship Challenges Facing Our Nation

What GAO Found

Since the enactment of key financial management reforms, the federal government has made substantial progress in improving financial management activities and practices. Federal financial systems requirements have been developed, and internal control has been strengthened. Nonetheless, the federal government still has a long way to go to address the six principal challenges to fully realizing strong federal financial management: (1) transforming financial management and business practices at DOD, (2) improving agency financial and performance reporting, (3) modernizing financial management systems, (4) addressing key remaining internal control weaknesses, (5) building a financial management workforce for the future, and (6) strengthening consolidated financial reporting.

From a broad financial management perspective, the federal government's financial condition and fiscal outlook are worse than many understand. We are currently experiencing strong economic growth and yet running large on-budget (operating) deficits that are largely unrelated to the Global War on Terrorism. The federal government faces large and growing structural deficits in future years due primarily to known demographic trends and rising health care costs. As shown in the chart below, if it is assumed that recent tax reductions are made permanent and discretionary spending keeps pace with the growth of our economy, GAO's long-term simulations suggest that by 2040, federal revenues may be adequate to pay little more than interest on debt held by the public and some Social Security benefits. Neither slowing the discretionary spending growth nor allowing certain tax provisions to expire—nor both together—would eliminate the imbalance.

Potential Fiscal Outcomes under Alternative Simulation: Discretionary Spending Grows with GDP after 2007 and All Expiring Tax Provisions Are Extended



Source: GAO's January 2007 analysis.

Note: The Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) exemption amount is retained at the 2006 level through 2017 and expiring tax provisions are extended. After 2017, revenue as a share of GDP is held constant—implicitly assuming that action is taken to offset increased revenue from real bracket creep, the AMT, and tax-deferred retirement accounts.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here today to testify on the progress made towards a results-oriented, accountable, and relevant government and the challenges that must be addressed to provide accountability and exercise stewardship. The foundation laid by the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act of 1990[1] and other management reform legislation provides a basis to improve the accountability of government programs and operations as well as to routinely produce valuable cost and operating performance information. While certain material weaknesses in internal control and in selected accounting and financial reporting practices continue to prevent GAO from being able to issue an opinion on the consolidated financial statements of the U.S. government, the federal government has come a long way since enactment of the CFO Act. At the same time, there is a continuing need to address persistent, long-standing accountability problems and to take financial management to the next level. This will be important as the federal government faces difficult fiscal challenges that will require reliable cost and performance information to support timely decisions on spending and, at the same time, pressures to address fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement will only intensify.

From a broad financial management perspective, the federal government's deteriorating long-range financial condition and long-term fiscal imbalance are matters of increasing concern. We face large and growing structural deficits due primarily to known demographic trends and rising health care costs. There is a need to engage in a fundamental review, reprioritization, and reengineering of the base of government. Understanding and addressing the federal government's financial condition and long-term fiscal imbalance are critical to maintain fiscal flexibility so that we can respond to emerging social, economic, and security challenges.

Your decision to begin this Congress with a hearing on these important issues demonstrates the seriousness with which this Subcommittee views the financial management challenges facing the federal government and your commitment to address them. Today I would like to:

- outline progress made to date and the key challenges in improving federal financial management practices, and

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[1] Pub. L. No. 101-576, 104 Stat. 2838 (Nov. 15, 1990).

- highlight the challenges posed by the government's fiscal condition and my views on a possible way forward.

Our prior work on which this testimony is based was performed in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Summary

Since the enactment of key financial management reforms, the federal government has made substantial progress in strengthening financial management. Since passage of the CFO Act, all of the administrations have made financial management reform a priority. Improving financial management has been one of the cornerstones of the President's Management Agenda from the outset of the current administration, and the Executive Branch Management Scorecard, which tracks the status of progress at agencies, has been an effective tool to drive improvement. We have seen a cultural change in how financial management is viewed and carried out in most agencies and a recognition of the value and need for good financial management throughout government, which was not the case in 1990 when the Congress passed the CFO Act. Financial management systems have been improved. Internal control has been strengthened, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has increased emphasis on establishing, assessing, correcting, and reporting on internal control. Generally accepted government accounting standards have been developed. For fiscal year 2006, 19 of 24 CFO Act agencies received clean audit opinions on their financial statements, up from just 6 for fiscal year 1996. Audited financial statements for federal agencies were issued just 1½ months after the close of this fiscal year as opposed to 5 months, which was the case just a few years ago.

A number of challenges remain to fully realizing the world-class financial management anticipated by the Congress through the enactment of financial management reform legislation. It will be critical that the federal government meet these challenges so that reliable, useful, and timely financial information is available not only for day-to-day management, decision making, and oversight, but also to provide the key cost and performance data needed to help address our nation's looming fiscal crisis. I see six principal challenges, which I will highlight in my testimony today against the backdrop of our nation's deteriorating long-range financial condition and long-term fiscal imbalance.

- There is a need to transform financial management and business practices at the Department of Defense (DOD) that adversely affect the department's and the federal government's ability to control costs;

ensure basic accountability; anticipate future costs and claims on the budget; measure performance; maintain funds control; prevent fraud, waste, and abuse; and address pressing and persistent management problems. Of the 27 areas on GAO's high-risk list, 15 relate wholly or partially to DOD. The problems at DOD are deeply rooted and I do not anticipate they will be resolved in the near future, but meaningful progress should be expected. Today, we see a commitment from top DOD management, and actions are under way, such as the Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness (FIAR) plan, to address serious problems. In our view, DOD needs to (1) develop and implement a viable strategic plan with goals, objectives, key milestones, and measures to monitor and report on progress in transforming its key business operations, and (2) establish a chief management officer to oversee its overall business transformation efforts.

- Improvements in financial and performance reporting practices are needed so that for the remaining 23 CFO Act agencies, unqualified opinions on financial statements become routine. In particular, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)—an agency whose implementation and transformation we have designated as high risk since its inception—faces significant challenges to achieve this milestone. Developing and implementing corrective action plans to improve the underlying financial management systems and internal control will be necessary to address financial reporting problems.

- Financial management systems must be modernized to provide the complete range of information needed for accountability, performance reporting, and decision making. While the problems are much more severe at some agencies than others, overall, agencies' current financial systems do not meet basic statutory systems requirements and, more importantly, do not provide timely, reliable, and useful information for day-to-day management. Our work has shown that best practices in systems implementation that can reduce risk are not being consistently applied when agencies undertake a major financial management system modernization effort. Full adoption of these best practices is equally important as OMB moves forward on its initiative to migrate agencies to shared service providers.

- The federal government continues to face a myriad of material weaknesses and reportable conditions in internal control related to property, plant, and equipment; inventories and related property; liabilities and commitments and contingencies; and disbursement activities, just to mention a few of the problem areas. Particularly problematic to the U.S. government's consolidated financial statements is the lack of internal control to adequately account for and reconcile intragovernmental activity and balances. Agencies need to tackle long-standing internal control weaknesses by fully embracing the assessment, reporting, and corrective action approach called for in OMB's revised Circular No. A-123 and following intragovernmental procedures developed by OMB and the Department of the Treasury (Treasury). Another key problem area is the tens of billions of dollars federal agencies waste on improper payments.[2] Adopting our specific recommendations to improve reporting under the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002[3] is important to fully understand the nature and extent of this problem.

- The federal financial workforce that supports the business needs of today is not well positioned to support the needs of tomorrow. The lack of a sufficient number of staff with the requisite knowledge, skills, and experience has hampered financial management operations at key agencies such as DOD and DHS. At Treasury, during our work on the U.S. government consolidated financial statements, we found that there were not enough personnel with specialized financial reporting experience to help ensure reliable financial reporting by the reporting date. Building a sufficient and sustainable financial management workforce for the future to support program managers and decision makers will require a workforce transformation strategy developed in partnership between agency CFOs and Chief Human Capital Officers, working with OMB and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). To sustain financial management reform given the leadership changes that occur at the end of any administration, establishing management accountability at an appropriate level with significant authority, experience, and tenure to provide sustained leadership is needed to achieve successful and sustainable transformation. Establishing such positions at selected agencies, such as DOD and DHS, will be a critical success factor.

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[2] The Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-300) defines improper payments as any payment that should not have been made or that was made in an incorrect amount (including overpayments and underpayments) under statutory, contractual, administrative, or other legally applicable requirements. It includes any payment to an ineligible recipient, any payment for an ineligible service, any duplicate payment, payments for services not received, and any payment that does not account for credit for applicable discounts.

[3] Pub. L. No. 107-300, 116 Stat. 2350 (Nov. 26, 2002).

- Three major impediments—that have existed for the entire 10-year period GAO has been required to perform this annual audit—continue to prevent us from rendering an opinion on the U.S. government's consolidated financial statements: (1) the deeply rooted, long-standing, and pervasive financial management problems in DOD; (2) the federal government's inability to adequately account for and reconcile significant amounts in intragovernmental activity and balances between federal agencies; and (3) the federal government's ineffective process for preparing the consolidated financial statements. As I previously discussed, addressing the first two impediments will be difficult challenges. Resolving the weaknesses in the systems, controls, and procedures for preparing the consolidated financial statements will require a strong commitment from Treasury and OMB. Notwithstanding the difficulties to overcome current challenges, we should consider the need for further revisions to the current federal financial reporting model to recognize the unique needs of the federal government, which would affect both consolidated and agency financial reporting. While the current reporting model recognizes some of these needs, a broad reconsideration of issues such as the kind of information that may be relevant and useful for a sovereign nation, could stimulate needed discussion and lead to reporting enhancements that might help the Congress deliberate strategies to address our growing long-term fiscal imbalance. In this regard, we support the current efforts of the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) to begin a project on fiscal sustainability reporting. We also support a Statement of Fiscal Sustainability that clearly shows the extent to which future revenues are sufficient to support the federal government's growing entitlement and other spending. We believe that such reporting needs to reflect the significant commitments associated with the Social Security and Medicare programs while recognizing a liability for the net assets (principally investments in special U.S. Treasury securities) of the "trust funds." We also believe that any such statements need to consider the intergenerational implications of our current fiscal path. Other areas to reconsider might include the reporting of key outcome-based performance information, as well as the role of a balance sheet in the federal government reporting model. In addition, we support the preparation and publication of an easily understandable summary annual report that includes in a clear, concise, and transparent manner, key financial and performance information embodied in the *Financial Report of the United States Government.*

Addressing the six principal financial management challenges I just discussed will help ensure that the financial and performance data provided to decision makers are reliable, useful, and timely. Having such information will be critical to deal with our nation's significant challenges regarding the long-term fiscal imbalance of the government—that is, the sustainability of the federal government's programs, commitments, and responsibilities in relation to the resources expected to be available. I recently provided all members of the new Congress with a package of materials to help them understand the facts, why we should start sooner rather than later, and what types of changes need to be considered.[4] More troubling than the persistent short-term budget deficits, long-range fiscal simulations by GAO and others show that over the long term, we face large and growing structural deficits in future years due primarily to known demographic trends and rising health care costs. The federal government's fiscal exposures now total over $50 trillion, representing close to four times gross domestic product (GDP) in fiscal year 2006 and up from about $20 trillion or two times GDP in 2000. We all know that it is hard to make sense of what "trillions" means. One way to think about it is: if we wanted to put aside today enough to cover these promises, it would take about $440,000 per American household, up from $190,000 in 2000. Clearly, despite recent progress on our short-term deficits, we have been moving in the wrong direction in connection with our long-range imbalance in recent years.

As members of this Subcommittee know, continuing on our current fiscal path would gradually erode, if not suddenly damage, our economy, our standard of living, and ultimately even our domestic tranquility and national security. Many of the federal government's current policies, programs, functions, and activities are based on conditions that existed decades ago, are not results-based, and are not well aligned with 21st century realities. Our report, *21st Century Challenges: Reexamining the Base of the Federal Government*[5] provided a suggested list of specific federal activities for reexamination, and perspectives on various strategies, processes, and approaches for congressional consideration that could be used in reexamining the federal base. I have proposed a number of ideas for improving the transparency of long-term costs and the attention paid to these costs before decisions are made. For example, in addition to the Statement of Fiscal Sustainability I just described, a portfolio of outcome-based key national indicators could also be a useful tool to help measure progress, assess trends, and communicate complex issues. The Congress should consider supporting a public/private partnership approach to making key national indicators a reality.

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[4] GAO, *Fiscal Stewardship: A Critical Challenge Facing Our Nation*, GAO-07-362SP (Washington, D.C.: January 2007); *The Nation's Long-Term Fiscal Outlook: September 2006 Update*, GAO-06-1077R (Washington, D.C.); *Understanding the Similarities and Differences between Accrual and Cash Deficits*, GAO-07-117SP (Washington, D.C.: December 2006) and its supplement, *Accrual and Cash Deficits: Update for Fiscal Year 2006*, GAO-07-341SP (Washington, D.C.); *Understanding the Primary Components of the Annual Financial Report of the United States*, GAO-05-958SP (Washington, D.C.: September 2005); and *Statement of the Comptroller General of the United States* transmitting GAO's report on the U.S. government's consolidated financial statements for fiscal years 2006 and 2005.

[5] GAO, *21st Century Challenges: Reexamining the Base of the Federal Government*, GAO-05-325SP (Washington, D.C.: February 2005).

Progress Made and the Key Challenges that Remain in Improving Federal Financial Management Practices

The federal government has made substantial progress in financial management. If I were to summarize in just a few words the environment in 2007 as compared to prior to enactment of key financial management laws, financial management has gone from the backroom to the boardroom. There has been a cultural change in how financial management is viewed and carried out in the agencies and a recognition of the value and need for good financial management throughout government, which was not the case in 1990 when the Congress passed the CFO Act. Financial management systems and internal control have been strengthened. Generally accepted government accounting standards have been developed. For fiscal year 2006, 19 of 24 CFO Act agencies received clean audit opinions on their financial statements, up from just 6 for fiscal year 1996. While there has been marked progress in federal financial management, a number of challenges still remain, including transforming financial management and business practices at DOD, modernizing financial management systems, and building a financial management workforce for the future. Fully meeting these challenges will enable the federal government to provide the world-class financial management anticipated by the CFO Act and other management reform legislation.

Progress Made since Passage of Key Federal Financial Management Legislation

First, I would like to briefly highlight the legislative framework that governs federal financial management. The Congress has long recognized the importance of the federal government implementing strong financial management practices. Towards this end, the Congress has passed a series of management reform legislation aimed at improving and providing a strong foundation for federal financial management. This series of legislation started with the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of

1982 (FMFIA),[6] which the Congress passed to strengthen internal control and accounting systems throughout the federal government, among other purposes. In accordance with FMFIA, GAO has issued *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*,[7] which provides the standards that are directed at helping agency managers implement effective internal control, an integral part of improving financial management systems.

While agencies had achieved some early success in identifying and correcting material internal control and accounting system weaknesses, their efforts to implement FMFIA had not produced the intended results. Therefore, the Congress passed additional management reform legislation to improve the general and financial management of the federal government. This legislation includes the (1) CFO Act of 1990, (2) Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA),[8] (3) Government Management Reform Act of 1994 (GMRA),[9] (4) Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 (FFMIA),[10] (5) Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996,[11] (6) Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002 (ATDA),[12] and (7) Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (IPIA).[13]

The CFO Act is the most comprehensive and far-reaching financial management improvement act since the Budget and Accounting Procedures Act of 1950. The CFO Act established a leadership structure, provided for long-range planning, required audited financial statements and modern financial systems, and strengthened accountability reporting for certain agencies. Three years later, the Congress enacted GPRA, which required certain agencies to develop strategic plans, set performance goals, and report annually on actual performance compared to goals.

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[6] FMFIA is codified at 31 U.S.C. § 3512(c), (d).

[7] GAO, *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, GAO/AIMD-00.21.3.1 (Washington, D.C.: November 1999).

[8] Pub. L. No. 103-62, 107 Stat. 285 (Aug. 3, 1993).

[9] Pub. L. No. 103-356, 108 Stat. 3410 (Oct. 13, 1994).

[10] Pub. L. No. 104-208, div. A., sec. 101(f), title VIII, 110 Stat. 3009, 3009-389 (Sept. 30, 1996).

[11] Pub. L. No. 104-106, div. E, 110 Stat. 186, 679 (Feb. 10, 1996).

[12] Pub. L. No. 107-289, 116 Stat. 2049 (Nov. 7, 2002).

[13] Pub. L. No. 107-300, 116 Stat. 2350 (Nov. 26, 2002).

GPRA's emphasis on performance management complements the concepts in the CFO Act. GPRA was followed by GMRA, which made permanent the pilot program in the CFO Act for annual audited agency-level financial statements, expanded this requirement to all CFO Act agencies, and established a requirement for the preparation and audit of governmentwide consolidated financial statements. In 1996, FFMIA built on the foundation laid by the CFO Act by reflecting the need for CFO Act agencies to have systems that can generate reliable, useful, and timely information with which to make fully informed decisions and to ensure accountability on an ongoing basis. The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 (also known as the Information Technology Management Reform Act of 1996) sets forth a variety of initiatives to support better decision making for capital investments in information technology, which has led to the development of the Federal Enterprise Architecture and better-informed capital investment and control processes within agencies and across government. ATDA required most executive agencies that were not otherwise required by statute or exempted by OMB, to prepare annual audited financial statements and to submit such statements to the Congress and the Director of OMB. Finally, IPIA has increased visibility over improper payments by requiring executive agency heads, based on guidance from the OMB,[14] to identify programs and activities susceptible to significant improper payments,[15] estimate amounts improperly paid, and report on the amounts of improper payments and their actions to reduce them. The combination of reforms ushered in by these laws, if successfully implemented, provides a solid foundation to improve the accountability of government programs and operations as well as to routinely produce valuable cost and operating performance information.

The five key financial management improvements that we have noted from a governmentwide perspective are as follows.

- *Achieving Cultural Change*—We have seen true cultural change in how financial management is viewed. This has been accomplished through a lot of hard work by OMB and the agencies and continued strong support and oversight by the Congress. At the top level, federal financial management reform has gained momentum through the committed support of top federal leaders. For example, improved financial performance is one of the governmentwide initiatives in the President's Management Agenda (PMA). Under this initiative, agency CFOs share responsibility—both individually and through the efforts of the CFO Council—for improving the financial performance of the government. The Executive Branch Management Scorecard, developed as part of the PMA, has been an effective tool to monitor progress and help drive much needed improvements.

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[14] OMB Memorandum M-03-13, "Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-300)" (May 21, 2003), and OMB Circular No. A-136, *Financial Reporting Requirements*, § II.5.6 (July 24, 2006). OMB recently issued revised guidance for fiscal year 2006 reporting in OMB Memorandum M-06-23, "Issuance of Appendix C to OMB Circular No. A-123" (Aug. 10, 2006).

[15] OMB's guidance defines significant improper payments as those in any particular program that exceed both 2.5 percent of program payments and $10 million annually.

- *Establishing a Governmentwide Leadership Structure*—The Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP)[16] Principals—the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of OMB, the Director of OPM, and myself, the Comptroller General—have provided leadership by holding periodic meetings that have resulted in unprecedented substantive deliberations and agreements focused on key reform issues such as improving accounting for and reporting on social insurance, accelerating issuance of audited agency financial statements, and advocating audit committees. GAO has led by example in this regard, by establishing an audit advisory committee to help us in overseeing the effectiveness of our current financial reporting and audit processes.

  As established by the CFO Act, the Office of Federal Financial Management (OFFM), the OMB organization with governmentwide responsibility for federal financial management for executive agencies, has demonstrated leadership by undertaking a number of initiatives related to improving financial management capabilities ranging from requiring the use of commercial off-the-shelf financial systems to the promotion of cost accounting to improve the availability of management information for decision making. In addition to assessing the status of agencies' progress in improving financial performance for the PMA, OFFM has also issued bulletins, circulars, and other guidance to provide a broad-based foundation for transforming agencies' financial management operations.

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[16] JFMIP was originally formed under the authority of the Budget and Accounting Procedures Act of 1950 and was a joint and cooperative undertaking of the Government Accountability Office, the Department of the Treasury, OMB, and OPM, working in cooperation with each other to improve financial management practices in the federal government. A JFMIP Program Management Office developed federal financial management systems requirements, and tested core federal financial management systems. In a December 2004 memorandum, OMB announced a realignment of JFMIP's responsibilities for financial management policy and oversight in the federal government.

- *Strengthening Internal Control*—In December 2004, OMB revised its Circular No. A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Internal Control*, to provide guidance to federal managers on improving the accountability and effectiveness of federal programs and operations by establishing, assessing, correcting, and reporting on management controls. Requiring federal managers, at the executive level, to focus on internal control demonstrates a renewed emphasis on identifying and addressing internal control weaknesses. As we testified[17] in 2005, many internal control problems have been identified and fixed, especially at the lower levels where internal control assessments were performed and managers could take focused actions to fix relatively simple problems. As a recent case in point, based on our 2006 assessment of high-risk programs,[18] two programs previously designated as high risk, largely due to financial management weaknesses, were removed from the list.

  Agencies have also made progress in implementing processes and controls to identify, estimate, and reduce improper payments. After passage of IPIA, OMB established Eliminating Improper Payments in 2005 as a new program-specific initiative under the PMA. This separate PMA program initiative was established in this manner to ensure that agency managers are held accountable for meeting the goals of IPIA and are, therefore, dedicating the necessary attention and resources to meeting IPIA requirements. OMB also issued guidance in August 2006 to help clarify and update requirements to support governmentwide IPIA compliance.[19]

- *Improving Financial Management Systems and Operations*—Since enactment of financial management reform legislation, federal financial management systems requirements have been developed for the core financial system; managerial cost system; and other administrative and programmatic systems, such as grants, property, revenue, travel, and loans, which are part of an overall financial management system. After the realignment of the JFMIP Program Management Office, OFFM has continued the practice of issuing these requirements. Beginning in 1999, OMB required agencies to purchase commercial off-the-shelf software that had been tested and certified by the federal government against the systems requirements that I just mentioned. With these requirements, the federal government has better defined the functionality needed in its financial management systems, which has helped the vendor community understand federal agencies' needs.

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[17] GAO, *Financial Management: Effective Internal Control is Key to Accountability*, GAO-05-321T (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 16, 2005).

[18] GAO, *High-Risk Series: An Update*, GAO-07-310 (Washington, D.C.: January 2007).

[19] OMB, *Issuance of Appendix C to OMB Circular A-123*, M-06-23, August 10, 2006.

OMB continues to move forward on initiatives that support the PMA with the further development of the financial management line of business to promote leveraging shared service solutions to enhance the government's performance and services. The financial management line of business initiative is modeled after the consolidation of agencies processing payroll, which were dramatically reduced from 22 to 4 systems. OMB, in conjunction with an interagency task force, estimated that these efforts could save billions of taxpayer dollars. Ultimately, this initiative is expected to (1) reduce the number of systems that each individual agency must support, (2) promote standardization, and (3) reduce the duplication of efforts.

- *Preparing Auditable Financial Statements*—Unqualified audit opinions for CFO Act agencies' financial statements have grown from 6 in fiscal year 1996 to 19 in fiscal year 2006. Improvements in timeliness have been even more dramatic over the years. Agencies were able to issue their audited financial statements within the accelerated reporting time frame—all 24 CFO Act agencies issued their audited financial statements by the November 15, 2006, deadline,[20] set by OMB, just 45 days after the close of the fiscal year. Just a few years ago, most considered this accelerated time frame unrealistic and unachievable.

  Another definitive example of progress made to date is the establishment of the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB). In conjunction with the passage of the CFO Act, the OMB Director, Secretary of the Treasury, and the Comptroller General established FASAB to develop accounting standards and principles for the newly required financial statements. The concepts and standards are the basis for OMB's guidance to agencies on the form and content of their financial statements and for the government's consolidated financial statements. FASAB is comprised of a 10-member advisory board of 4 knowledgeable individuals from government and 6 nonfederal members selected from the general financial community, the accounting and auditing community, and academia to promulgate proposed accounting standards designed to meet the needs of federal agencies and other users of federal financial information. The mission of FASAB is to develop accounting standards after considering the financial and budgetary information needs of congressional oversight groups, executive agencies, and other users. These accounting and reporting standards are essential for public accountability and for an efficient and effective functioning of our democratic system of government. The standards developed by FASAB have been recognized by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants as generally accepted accounting standards for federal entities.

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[20] The independent auditors for the Department of State's fiscal year 2006 financial statements issued a disclaimer of opinion on November 14, 2006, because the department could not provide evidential matter in a timely manner to meet the November 15, 2006, reporting deadline. After receiving adequate documentation to support the amounts on the financial statements, the auditors issued an unqualified opinion on the Department of State's fiscal year 2006 financial statements on December 12, 2006.

Financial Management Challenges Facing the Federal Government

While there has been marked progress in federal financial management, a number of challenges still remain. The principal challenges remaining are (1) transforming financial management and business practices at DOD, (2) improving financial and performance reporting, (3) modernizing financial management systems, (4) tackling long-standing internal control weaknesses, (5) building a financial management workforce for the future, and (6) strengthening consolidated financial reporting. Fully meeting these challenges will enable the federal government to provide the world-class financial management anticipated by the CFO Act and other management reform legislation. While there continues to be much focus on the agency and governmentwide audit opinions, getting a clean audit opinion, though important in itself, is not the end goal. The end goal is the establishment of a fully functioning CFO operation that includes (1) modern financial management systems that provide reliable, timely, and useful information to support day-to-day decision making and oversight, and for the systematic measurement of performance; (2) sound internal controls that safeguard assets and help ensure proper accountability; and (3) a cadre of highly qualified CFOs and supporting staff.

Transforming DOD's Financial and Business Management Practices

DOD's long-standing financial and business management difficulties are pervasive, complex, and deeply rooted in virtually all business operations throughout the department. Resolution of these serious problems is essential to improving financial management governmentwide and achieving an opinion on the U.S. government's consolidated financial statements. Of the 27 areas on GAO's high-risk list,[21] DOD has 8 of its own high-risk areas and shares responsibility for 7 governmentwide high-risk areas. These weaknesses adversely affect the department's and the federal government's ability to control costs; ensure basic accountability; anticipate future costs and claims on the budget; measure performance; maintain funds control; prevent fraud, waste, and abuse; and address pressing management problems. Additionally, the department invests billions of dollars each year to operate, maintain, and modernize its business systems. But despite this significant annual investment, the department has been continually confronted with the difficult task of implementing business systems on time, within budget, and with the promised capability.

We also have concerns about the reasonableness, reliability, and transparency of DOD's budget requests, especially the supplemental budget requests the department has submitted to the Congress in recent years. Reasonableness and reliability are critical factors not only for financial information, but also for budget data. As I testified[22] last year, our prior work found numerous problems with DOD's processes for recording and reporting costs for the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), the funding for which has been provided through regular appropriations as well as supplemental appropriations. These problems included long-standing deficiencies in DOD's financial management systems and business processes, the use of estimates instead of actual cost data, and the lack of adequate supporting documentation. As a result, neither DOD nor the Congress have reliable information on GWOT costs or the use of appropriated funds and also lack historical data useful in considering future funding needs.

The nature and severity of DOD's financial management, business operations, and system deficiencies not only affect financial reporting, but also impede the ability of DOD managers to receive the full range of information needed to effectively manage day-to-day operations. Such weaknesses have adversely affected the ability of DOD to control costs, ensure basic accountability, and prevent fraud. The following examples illustrate DOD's continuing problems.

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[21] GAO-07-310.

[22] GAO, *Global War on Terrorism: Observations on Funding, Costs, and Future Commitments*, GAO-06-885T (Washington, D.C.: July 18, 2006).

- We found that hundreds of separated battle-injured soldiers were pursued for collection of military debts incurred through no fault of their own, including 74 soldiers whose debts had been reported to credit bureaus, private collection agencies, and the Treasury Offset Program at the time we initiated our audit.[23] Overpayment of pay and allowances (entitlements), pay calculation errors, and erroneous leave payments caused 73 percent of the reported debts.

- Over the past several years, we have reported[24] on significant pay problems experienced by mobilized Army National Guard and Army Reserve (Army Guard and Reserve) soldiers in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. These reports included examples of hundreds of soldiers receiving inaccurate and untimely payroll payments due to a paper-intensive, error-prone pay process and the lack of integrated pay and personnel systems. In response to our reports, DOD has taken some action to improve controls designed to pay Army Guard and Reserve soldiers accurately and on time, especially those who had become sick or injured in the line of duty.

- In March 2006, we reported[25] that DOD's policies and procedures for determining, reporting, and documenting cost estimates associated with environmental cleanup or containment activities were not consistently followed. Further, none of the military services had adequate controls in place to help ensure that all identified contaminated sites were included in their environmental liability cost estimates. These weaknesses not only affected the reliability of DOD's environmental liability estimate, but also that of the federal government as a whole.

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[23] GAO, *Military Pay: Hundreds of Battle-Injured GWOT Soldiers Have Struggled to Resolve Military Debts*, GAO-06-494 (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 27, 2006).

[24] GAO, *Military Pay: Inadequate Controls for Stopping Overpayments of Hostile Fire and Hardship Duty Pay to Over 200 Sick or Injured Army National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers Assigned to Fort Bragg*, GAO-06-384R (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 27, 2006); *Military Pay: Gaps in Pay and Benefits Create Financial Hardships for Injured Army National Guard and Reserve Soldiers*, GAO-05-125 and GAO-05-322T (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 17, 2005); *Army National Guard: Inefficient, Error-Prone Process Results in Travel Reimbursement Problems for Mobilized Soldiers*, GAO-05-79 (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 31, 2005) and GAO-05-400T (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 16, 2005); *Military Pay: Army Reserve Soldiers Mobilized to Active Duty Experienced Significant Pay Problems*, GAO-04-911 (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 20, 2004) and GAO-04-990T (Washington, D.C.: July 20, 2004); and *Military Pay: Army National Guard Personnel Mobilized to Active Duty Experienced Significant Pay Problems*, GAO-04-413T (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 28, 2004) and GAO-04-89 (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 13, 2003).

[25] GAO, *Environmental Liabilities: Long-Term Fiscal Planning Hampered by Control Weaknesses and Uncertainties in the Federal Government's Estimates*, GAO-06-427 (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 31, 2006).

- In May 2005, we reported[26] that DOD did not have management controls in place to assure that excess inventory was reutilized to the maximum extent possible. We found significant waste and inefficiency because new, unused, and excellent condition items were transferred and donated outside of DOD, sold for pennies on the dollar, or destroyed. Root causes for the waste and inefficiency included (1) unreliable excess property inventory data; (2) inadequate oversight and physical inventory control; and (3) outdated, nonintegrated excess inventory and supply management systems.

The department is provided billions of dollars annually to operate, maintain, and modernize its stovepiped, duplicative, legacy business systems. Despite this significant investment, the department is severely challenged in implementing business systems on time, within budget, and with the promised capability. Many of the problems related to DOD's inability to effectively implement its business systems can be attributed to its failure to implement the disciplined processes[27] necessary to reduce the risks associated with these projects to acceptable levels.[28] Disciplined processes have been shown to reduce the risks associated with software development and acquisition efforts and are fundamental to successful systems acquisition. The weaknesses that we found in DOD business systems implementations such as the Defense Travel System,[29] the Logistics Modernization Program,[30] and the Navy's Enterprise Resource

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[26] GAO, *DOD Excess Property: Management Control Breakdowns Result in Substantial Waste and Inefficiency*, GAO-05-277 (Washington, D.C.: May 13, 2005).

[27] Disciplined processes include a wide range of activities, including project planning and management, requirements management, risk management, quality assurance, and testing.

[28] Acceptable levels refer to the fact that any systems acquisition effort will have risks and will suffer the adverse consequences associated with defects in the processes. However, effective implementation of disciplined processes reduces the possibility of the potential risks actually occurring and prevents significant defects from materially affecting the cost, timeliness, and performance of the project.

[29] GAO, *Defense Travel System: Reported Savings Questionable and Implementation Challenges Remain*, GAO-06-980 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 26, 2006).

[30] GAO, *Army Depot Maintenance: Ineffective Oversight of Depot Maintenance Operations and System Implementation Efforts*, GAO-05-441 (Washington, D.C.: June 30, 2005).

Planning (ERP) efforts[31] illustrate the types of system acquisition and investment management controls that need to be effectively implemented in order for a given investment to be successfully acquired and deployed.

Meeting the Challenge of Transforming DOD Financial and Business Management Practices. Successful reform of DOD's fundamentally flawed financial and business management operations must simultaneously focus on its systems, processes, and people. DOD's top management has demonstrated a commitment to transforming the department and has launched key initiatives to improve its financial management processes and related business systems such as the Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness (FIAR) Plan. However, DOD still lacks two key elements that are needed to ensure a successful and sustainable transformation effort.

- As we have previously recommended, DOD should develop and implement an integrated and strategic business transformation plan. Since 1999, we have recommended the need for a comprehensive, integrated strategy and action plan for reforming DOD's major business operations and support activities.[32] Critical to the success of DOD's ongoing transformation efforts will be top management attention and structures that focus on transformation from a broad perspective and a clear, comprehensive, integrated, and enterprisewide plan that, at a summary level, addresses all of the department's major business areas.
- Because of the complexity and long-term nature of DOD's business transformation efforts, we again reiterate the need for a chief management officer (CMO) to provide sustained leadership and

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[31] GAO, *DOD Business Systems Modernization: Navy ERP Adherence to Best Business Practices Critical to Avoid Past Failures*, GAO-05-858 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 29, 2005).

[32] GAO, *Defense Reform Initiative: Organization, Status, and Challenges*, GAO/NSIAD-99-87 (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 21, 1999).

maintain momentum, as we have previously testified.[33] The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006[34] directs the department to study the feasibility of a CMO position in DOD. In this regard, the Institute for Defense Analysis issued its report in December 2006 and, among other things, called upon the Congress to establish a Deputy CMO (level III official) at the department. Further, in May 2006, the Defense Business Board recommended, among other things, the creation of a Principal Under Secretary of Defense, as a level II official with a 5-year term appointment, to serve as CMO. I strongly support a level II official and believe that someone at this level is needed to be successful given the magnitude of the challenge and the need to effect change across the department. It is important to note that a CMO would not assume the responsibilities of the undersecretaries of defense, the service secretaries, or other DOD officials for the day-to-day management of the department. Rather, the CMO would be responsible and accountable for planning, integrating, and executing the overall business transformation effort. The reason I am so passionate about the need for a CMO at DOD is that progress at DOD has historically been painfully slow. A host of well-intended past improvement initiatives has largely failed. I am concerned that without a CMO who is responsible and accountable for demonstrable results and sustained success, history will continue to repeat itself.

Improving Agency Financial and Performance Reporting

In the area of agency financial and performance reporting, I see obtaining unqualified opinions on financial statements at all CFO Act agencies as the primary challenge. While significant progress has been made by many CFO Act agencies to prepare timely annual financial statements that can pass the scrutiny of a financial audit, several agencies continue to struggle to reach this milestone. For fiscal year 2006, five CFO Act agencies—DOD,

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[33] GAO, *Department of Defense: Long-standing Problems Continue to Impede Financial and Business Management Transformation*, GAO-04-907T (Washington, D.C.: July 7, 2004); *Department of Defense: Financial and Business Management Transformation Hindered by Long-standing Problems*, GAO-04-941T (Washington, D.C.: July 8, 2004); *Department of Defense: Further Actions Are Needed to Effectively Address Business Management Problems and Overcome Key Business Transformation Challenges*, GAO-05-140T (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 18, 2004); *DOD's High-Risk Areas: Successful Business Transformation Requires Sound Strategic Planning and Sustained Leadership*, GAO-05-520T (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 13, 2005); and *Department of Defense: Sustained Leadership Is Critical to Effective Financial and Business Management Transformation*, GAO-06-1006T (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 3, 2006).

[34] National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, Pub. L. No. 109-163, § 907, 119 Stat. 3136, 3403 (Jan. 6, 2006).

DHS,[35] National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and the Departments of Energy[36] and Transportation—failed to meet this basic requirement. Problems at NASA and the Department of Energy stem from deficiencies in those agencies' implementation of new financial management systems, among other things. The Department of Transportation auditors cited significant problems with a key accounting practice at the Federal Aviation Administration as the underlying cause for qualifying their opinion on the department's financial statements. As I previously discussed, the problems faced by DOD are so pervasive that in accordance with section 1008 of the fiscal year 2002 National Defense Authorization Act,[37] for the sixth year, DOD acknowledged that its systems could not support material amounts on DOD's fiscal year 2006 financial statements and accordingly, the auditors did not perform auditing procedures and disclaimed an opinion. At DHS, the auditors recognized that the department has not yet established the infrastructure and internal control necessary and disclaimed an opinion on its financial statements. Problems at these agencies also significantly impact our ability to provide an opinion on the U.S. government's consolidated financial statements.

Meeting the Challenge of Improved Financial and Performance Reporting. Addressing the financial and performance reporting weaknesses that impede CFO Act agencies from obtaining unqualified or clean opinions on the respective agency financial statements will vary depending upon the circumstances at the agency. Developing and implementing corrective action plans to address the identified problems are time-honored methods for resolving such problems. For example, the DOD Comptroller launched the FIAR Plan to guide improvements to address financial management deficiencies and achieve clean financial statement audit opinions. This plan incorporates our prior recommendations and ties planned improvement activities at the component and department levels together with accountable personnel, milestones, and required resources. We view the incremental line item approach, integration plans, and oversight structure outlined in the FIAR plan for examining DOD's operations and preparing for an audit as a significant improvement over prior financial improvement initiatives. However, we continue to stress that the effectiveness of DOD's FIAR plan will ultimately be measured by the department's ability to provide timely, reliable, and useful information for day-to-day management and decision making.

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[35] For fiscal year 2006, only the Consolidated Balance Sheet and Statement of Custodial Activity were subjected to audit, and the auditor was unable to express an opinion on these two financial statements.

[36] For fiscal year 2006, only the Consolidated Balance Sheet of the Department of Energy was subjected to audit, and the auditor qualified its opinion on this statement.

[37] Pub. L. No. 107-107, 115 Stat. 1012, 1206 (Dec. 28, 2001).

Modernizing Financial Management Systems

Since the passage of the CFO Act and FFMIA, there has been progress in achieving the financial systems requirements of these landmark laws. While improvements have been made throughout government, much work remains to fulfill the underlying goals of the CFO Act and FFMIA. In fiscal year 1997, 20 agencies were reported as having systems that were not in substantial compliance with at least one of the three FFMIA systems requirements,[38] while in fiscal year 2006, auditors for 17 of the CFO Act agencies reported that the agencies' financial management systems did not substantially comply with at least one of the three FFMIA requirements. The major barrier to achieving compliance with FFMIA continues to be the inability of agencies to meet federal financial management systems requirements, which involve not only core financial systems, but also administrative and programmatic systems. While the problems are much more severe at some agencies than at others and progress has been made in addressing financial management systems' weaknesses, the lack of substantial compliance with the three requirements of FFMIA, and the associated deficiencies, indicates that the financial management systems of many agencies are still not able to routinely produce reliable, useful, and timely financial information. Consequently, the federal government's access to relevant, timely, and reliable data to effectively manage and oversee its major programs, which is the ultimate objective, was and continues to be restricted.

What is most important is that the problem has been recognized. Across government, agencies have efforts under way to implement new financial management systems or to upgrade existing systems. Agencies expect that the new systems will provide reliable, useful, and timely data to support day-to-day managerial decision making and assist taxpayer and congressional oversight. Whether in government or the private sector, implementing and upgrading information systems is a difficult job and brings a degree of new risk. Organizations that follow and effectively implement accepted best practices in systems development and implementation (commonly referred to as disciplined processes) can manage and reduce these risks to acceptable levels. For example, as part of our work at DOD,[39] NASA,[40] and other agencies that have experienced significant problems in implementing new financial management systems, we have consistently found that these agencies were not following the necessary disciplined processes, human capital practices, and information technology management practices for efficient and effective development and implementation of such systems.

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[38] FFMIA requires CFO Act agencies financial management systems to comply substantially with (1) federal financial management systems requirements, (2) applicable federal accounting standards, and (3) the U.S. government standard general ledger at the transaction level.

Challenges also exist in implementing OMB's financial management line of business initiative that is aimed at significantly improving the financial data government managers need to make timely and successful decisions and reduce the cost of government operations. For example, as we reported in March 2006,[41] the requirements for agencies and private sector firms to become shared service providers and the services they must provide have not been adequately documented or effectively communicated to agencies and the private sector. We made several recommendations that focused on reducing the risk of this important initiative. During 2006, OMB addressed some of the weaknesses by issuing an initial version of migration planning guidance and publishing competition guidance for shared service providers and agencies. However, as OMB acknowledged in the *Federal Financial Management Report 2007*, it has not yet developed several critical elements needed to minimize risk, provide assurance, and develop understandings with software vendors, shared service providers, and agencies on topics such as standard business processes and common accounting codes. Further, a governmentwide concept of operations has not been developed that would identify interrelationships among federal financial systems and which financial management systems should be operated at an agency level and which should be operated at a governmentwide level and how those would integrate. In addition, processes have not been put in place to facilitate agency decisions on selecting a provider or focusing investment decisions on the benefits of standard processes and shared service providers.

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[39] GAO, *DOD Business Systems Modernization: Navy ERP Adherence to Best Business Practices Critical to Avoid Past Failures*, GAO-05-858 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 29, 2005); *Army Depot Maintenance: Ineffective Oversight of Depot Maintenance Operations and System Implementation Efforts*, GAO-05-441 (Washington, D.C.: Jun. 30, 2005); and *DOD Systems Modernization: Management of Integrated Military Human Capital Program Needs Additional Improvements*, GAO-05-189 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 11, 2005).

[40] GAO, *Business Modernization: Some Progress Made toward Implementing GAO Recommendations Related to NASA's Integrated Financial Management Program*, GAO-05-799R (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 9, 2005); *National Aeronautics and Space Administration: Significant Actions Needed to Address Long-standing Financial Management Problems*, GAO-04-754T (Washington, D.C.: May 19, 2004); and *Business Modernization: NASA's Challenges in Managing Its Integrated Financial Management Program*, GAO-04-255 (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 21, 2003).

[41] GAO, *Financial Management Systems: Additional Efforts Needed to Address Key Causes of Modernization Failures*, GAO-06-184 (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 15, 2006).

Meeting the Challenge of Modernizing Financial Systems. As the federal government moves forward with ambitious financial management system modernization efforts that identify opportunities to eliminate redundant systems and enhance information reliability and availability, adherence to disciplined processes, sound human capital practices, and proven information technology management practices is crucial to reduce risks to acceptable levels.

- To help address the underlying problems agencies face in implementing financial management systems that will help them adhere to the requirements of the CFO Act and FFMIA, we have made numerous specific recommendations to agencies to address the specific shortcomings we identified. For example, at NASA we made a total of 45 recommendations aimed at addressing weaknesses we identified in NASA's acquisition and implementation strategy for a new integrated financial management system.

- The key to avoiding these long-standing problems is to provide specific guidance to agencies that incorporate the best practices identified by the Software Engineering Institute, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, and other experts. Toward this end, we have recommended that OMB develop such guidance to help minimize the waste of scarce resources from modernization failures.

- We have also made a number of recommendations to OMB to help it provide a solid foundation for the financial management line of business initiative. OMB has projects under way to develop standard business processes, a common accounting code, and specific measures to assess the performance of the shared service providers to help address some shortcomings we identified. While all of these projects are important, developing a concept of operations is an important step because it lays the foundation for many subsequent decisions.

Addressing Long-standing Internal Control Weaknesses

While continuing progress has been made in strengthening internal control, at the same time, the federal government faces numerous internal control problems, some of which are long-standing and are well-documented at the agency level and governmentwide. As we have reported for a number of years in our audit reports on the U.S. government's consolidated financial statements, the federal government continues to have material weaknesses and reportable conditions in internal control related to property, plant, and equipment; inventories and related property; liabilities and commitments and contingencies; cost of government operations; and disbursement activities, just to mention a few of the problem areas. Particularly problematic to the U.S. government's consolidated financial statements is the lack of internal controls to adequately account for and reconcile intragovernmental activity and balances between federal agencies. Although OMB and Treasury require the CFOs of 35 executive departments and agencies to reconcile intragovernmental activity and balances on a quarterly basis, and report annually to GAO and others on reconciliation efforts at the end of the fiscal year, a substantial number of agencies did not adequately perform these reconciliations. To help address this problem, OMB worked with Treasury and the CFO Council to revise the business rules for intragovernmental transactions. Because these new rules became effective on October 1, 2006, it is too soon to tell if they will have the desired effect of strengthening internal controls. Resolving the intragovernmental transactions problem remains a difficult challenge and will require a strong commitment by agencies to fully implement the recently issued business rules and continued strong leadership by OMB.

As we testified[42] in February 2005, we support OMB's efforts to revitalize internal control assessments and reporting through the December 2004 revisions to Circular No. A-123. These revisions recognize that effective internal control is critical to improving federal agencies' effectiveness and accountability and to achieving the goals established by the Congress. They also considered the internal control standards issued by GAO,[43] which provide an overall framework for establishing and maintaining internal control and for identifying and addressing major performance and management challenges and areas at greatest risk of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. OMB reported in its *Federal Financial Management Report 2007*, that CFO Act agencies identified new financial reporting material weaknesses under this revised guidance, which is an important first step. As agencies expand their assessments and all agencies complete a full-scope assessment of internal control over financial reporting, they will develop a better understanding of the full nature and extent of material weaknesses.

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[42] GAO, *Financial Management: Effective Internal Control is Key to Accountability*, GAO-05-321T (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 16, 2005).

[43] GAO/AIMD-00-21.3.1.

Effective internal control, as envisioned in the revised Circular No. A-123, inherently includes a successful strategy for addressing improper payments. Attacking improper payment problems requires a strategy appropriate to the organization involved and its particular risks. We have found that entities using successful strategies to address their improper payment problems shared a common focus of improving the internal control system—the first line of defense in safeguarding assets and preventing and detecting errors and fraud. The Congress acted strongly to address the improper payment problem by passing IPIA and in fiscal year 2005, OMB began to separately track the elimination of improper payments under the PMA. As I pointed out in testimony[44] before this Subcommittee in December 2006, while agencies are making progress in reporting under IPIA, three major challenges remain in meeting the goals of the act. First, the existing reporting was incomplete because some agencies still had not instituted systematic methods to review all programs and some program estimates were not based on a valid statistical sampling methodology as required. Second, 10 risk-susceptible programs with outlays totaling over $234 billion in fiscal year 2005 had not provided improper payment estimates. Finally, OMB's implementing guidance includes specific criteria that limit the disclosure and transparency of agencies' improper payments.

Meeting the Challenge of Addressing Internal Control Weaknesses. Actions can be taken on several fronts to help resolve internal control weaknesses.

- As pointed out in our February 2005 testimony on internal controls,[45] there are six issues critical to effectively implementing the changes to Circular No. A-123—specifically, the need for: (1) development of supplemental guidance and implementation tools to help ensure that agency efforts are properly focused and meaningful; (2) vigilance over the broader range of controls covering program objectives; (3) strong support from managers throughout the agency, and at all levels; (4) risk-based assessments and an appropriate balance between the costs and benefits of controls; (5) management testing of controls in operation to assess if they are designed adequately and operating effectively, and to assist in formulating corrective actions; and (6) management accountability for control breakdowns.

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[44] GAO, *Improper Payments: Incomplete Reporting under the Improper Payments Information Act Masks the Extent of the Problem*, GAO-07-254T (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 5, 2006).

[45] GAO-05-321T.

- Addressing the multitude of problems in financial reporting internal controls, including reconciling intragovernmental activity and balances, that have been identified to date will require a significant effort over a long time. Many of these problems have been around for years and have proven resistant to actions to resolve them. Continuous monitoring by top agency management and OMB along with oversight by the Congress will be critical to successfully resolving these material weaknesses and enhancing financial management.
- The ultimate success of efforts to reduce improper payments depends, in part, on each agency's continuing diligence and commitment to meeting the requirements of IPIA and the related OMB guidance. Full and reasonable disclosure of the extent of the problems could be enhanced by modifying the act's underlying criteria used to identify which programs and activities are susceptible to significant improper payments and we asked[46] the Congress to consider amending IPIA to do so. We also recommended that OMB's implementing guidance be strengthened in several areas.

Building a Financial Management Workforce for the Future

The financial management workforce plays a critical role in government because the scale and complexity of federal activities requiring financial management and control are monumental. The federal government has always faced the challenge of sustaining the momentum of transformation because of the limited tenure of key administration officials. The current administration's PMA has served as a driver for governmentwide financial management improvements. It has been clear from the outset that the current administration is serious about improved financial management. We have been fortunate that, since the passage of the CFO Act, all three administrations have been supportive of financial management reform initiatives. And, as I discussed earlier, we have seen a positive cultural shift in the way the federal government conducts business. Given the long-term nature of the comprehensive changes needed and challenges still remaining to fully realize the goals of the CFO Act, it is unlikely they will all occur before the end of the current administration's term. Therefore, sustaining a commitment to transformation in future administrations will be critical to ensure that key management reforms, such as the CFO Act, are fully attained.

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[46] GAO, *Improper Payments: Agencies' Fiscal Year 2005 Reporting under the Improper Payments Information Act Remains Incomplete*, GAO-07-92 (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 14, 2006).

Changing the way business is done in a large, diverse, and complex organization like the federal government is not an easy undertaking. According to a survey of federal CFOs,[47] federal finance organizations of the future will have fewer people, with a greater percentage of analysts, as opposed to accounting technicians. However, today most functions within federal finance organizations are focused primarily on (1) establishing and administering financial management policy; (2) tracking, monitoring, and reconciling account balances; and (3) ensuring compliance with laws and regulations. While they recognize the need for change, according to the CFOs surveyed, many questions remain unanswered regarding how best to facilitate such changes.

When it comes to world-class financial management, our study[48] of nine leading private and public sector financial organizations found that leading financial organizations often had the same or similar core functions (i.e., budgeting, treasury management, general accounting, and payroll) as the federal government. However, the way these functions were put into operation varied depending on individual entity needs. Leading organizations reduced the number of resources required to perform routine financial management activities by (1) consolidating activities at a shared service center and (2) eliminating or streamlining duplicative or inefficient processes. Their goal was not only to reduce the cost of finance but also to organize finance to add value by reallocating finance resources to more productive and results-oriented activities like measuring financial performance, developing managerial cost information, and integrating financial systems.

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[47] Grant Thornton LLP and the Association of Government Accountants, *CFO Survey: Preparing for Tomorrow's Way of Doing Business* (Alexandria, Va.: March 1998).

[48] GAO, *Executive Guide: Creating Value Through World-class Financial Management*, GAO/AIMD-00-134 (Washington, D.C.: April 2000). Appendix II includes a synopsis of the key concepts discussed in the study.

The federal financial workforce that supports the business needs of today is not well-positioned to support the needs of tomorrow. A JFMIP study[49] indicated that a significant majority of the federal financial management workforce performs transaction support functions of a clerical and technical nature. These skills do not support the vision of tomorrow's business which will depend on an analytic financial management workforce providing decision support. A 2005 survey of senior level federal CFO executives[50] noted that the respondents still believed that mid- and lower-level personnel lack the skills needed for modern financial management. The 2005 survey indicated that the federal CFO community thought that overly complex civil service rules made it difficult to recruit entry-level talent and nearly impossible to hire middle managers from outside the government. Our work has shown that staffing shortages, particularly at key agencies such as DOD, DHS, and Treasury can adversely impact financial management operations. For example, as part of our work on the U.S. government's consolidated financial statements, we found that personnel at Treasury's Financial Management Service had excessive workloads that required an extraordinary amount of effort and dedication to compile the consolidated financial statements and that there were not enough personnel with specialized financial reporting experience to help ensure reliable financial reporting by the reporting date.[51]

Meeting the Challenge of Building the Financial Management Workforce. We have previously identified several factors that are critical to resolving financial management human capital issues.

- Part of the commitment to transformation is the establishment of skilled and sustained leadership through the creation of a chief management officer (CMO) at selected federal agencies. The CMO would serve as the strategic, enterprisewide integrator of efforts to transform agency business operations, including financial management. While we have called for the creation of such a position specifically at DOD and DHS, in July 2006, a major global consulting firm recommended that the concept of a chief operating officer be instituted in many federal agencies as the means to help achieve the transformation that many agencies have undertaken.[52]

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[49] JFMIP, *Building a World Class Financial Workforce, The Federal Financial Management Workforce of the Future* (Washington, D.C.: September 2003).

[50] Grant Thornton LLP and the Association of Government Accountants, *CFO Survey: Integrating Internal Control with Performance Management* (Alexandria, Va.: 2005).

[51] See GAO's audit report on its audit of the federal government's fiscal year 2006 financial statements that was incorporated in the *2006 Financial Report of the U.S. Government* published by Treasury.

- Building a world-class financial workforce will require a workforce transformation strategy devised in partnership between CFOs and agency human resource departments, now established in law as Chief Human Capital Officers, working with OMB and OPM. Agency financial management leadership must identify current and future required competencies and compare them to an inventory of skills, knowledge, and current abilities of current employees. Then they must strategically manage to fill gaps and minimize overages through informed hiring, development, and separation strategies. This is similar to the approach that we identified when we designated strategic human capital management as a high-risk area in 2001.[53] Achieving a successful financial management vision of the future will be directly determined by the workforce that supports it. In our view, adequate succession planning to ensure these positions and other key senior-level financial management positions are promptly filled with highly qualified staff will be a key success factor to help transform federal financial management.

Strengthening Consolidated Financial Reporting

As you know, GAO is responsible for auditing the consolidated financial statements included in the *Financial Report of the United States Government (Financial Report)*, but we have been unable to express an opinion on them for the 10th year in a row because the federal government could not demonstrate the reliability of significant portions of the financial statements, especially in connection with major financial management challenges that I discussed earlier regarding DOD. The lack of effective internal controls to adequately account for and reconcile intragovernmental activity and balances is another primary challenge that impedes our ability to provide an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. The third major impediment that prevents us from rendering an opinion on the consolidated financial statements is the federal government's ineffective process for preparing the consolidated financial statements. As I previously discussed, addressing the first two impediments will be difficult challenges. Resolving the weaknesses in the systems, controls, and procedures for preparing the consolidated financial statements is also a formidable challenge.

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[52] T. Danker, T. Dohrmann, N. Killefer, and L. Mendonca, *How can American government meet its productivity challenge?* (Washington, D.C.: McKinsey & Company, 2006).

[53] GAO-05-207.

While further progress was demonstrated in fiscal year 2006, the federal government continued to have inadequate systems, controls, and procedures to ensure that the consolidated financial statements are consistent with the underlying audited agency financial statements, balanced, and in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. Most of the issues we identified in fiscal year 2006 existed in fiscal year 2005, and many have existed for a number of years. In addition, Treasury could not provide the final fiscal year 2006 consolidated financial statements and supporting documentation in time for us to complete all of our planned auditing procedures. During our fiscal year 2006 audit, we found the following:

- Treasury showed progress by demonstrating that amounts in the Statement of Social Insurance were consistent with the underlying federal agencies' audited financial statements and that the Balance Sheet and the Statement of Net Cost were consistent with federal agencies' financial statements prior to eliminating intragovernmental activity and balances. However, Treasury's process for compiling the consolidated financial statements did not ensure that the information in the remaining three 2006 principal financial statements and notes were fully consistent with the underlying information in federal agencies' audited financial statements and other financial data.

- To make the fiscal years 2006 and 2005 consolidated financial statements balance, Treasury recorded net decreases of $11 billion and $4.1 billion, respectively, to net operating cost on the Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Position, which it labeled "Other - Unmatched transactions and balances."[54] An additional net $10.4 billion and $3.2 billion of unmatched transactions were recorded in the Statement of Net Cost for fiscal years 2006 and 2005, respectively. Treasury is unable to fully identify and quantify all components of these unreconciled activities.

- The federal government did not have an adequate process to fully identify and report items needed to reconcile the operating results, which for fiscal year 2006 showed a net operating cost of $449.5 billion, to the budget results, which for the same period showed a unified budget deficit of $247.7 billion.

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[54] Although Treasury was unable to determine how much of the unmatched transactions and balances, if any, relate to operations, it reported this amount as a component of net operating cost in the accompanying consolidated financial statements.

We also noted other deficiencies related to the adequacy of required disclosures and whether amounts reported are complete. Treasury continued to make progress in addressing certain other internal control weaknesses in its process for preparing the consolidated financial statements. However, internal control weaknesses continued to exist involving a lack of (1) appropriate documentation of certain policies and procedures for preparing the consolidated financial statements, (2) adequate supporting documentation for certain adjustments made to the consolidated financial statements, and (3) effective management reviews.

As in previous years, Treasury did not have adequate systems and personnel to address the magnitude of the fiscal year 2006 financial reporting challenges it faced, such as (1) the Governmentwide Financial Report System (GFRS) undergoing further development[55] and not yet being fully operational, and (2) weaknesses in Treasury's process for preparing the consolidated financial statements noted above. One of the underlying causes of these weaknesses, as I discussed earlier, is the lack of sufficient personnel with specialized financial reporting experience to help ensure reliable financial reporting by the reporting date.

Meeting the Challenge of Strengthening Consolidated Financial Reporting. During fiscal year 2006, Treasury, in coordination with OMB, developed and began implementing corrective action plans and milestones for short-term and long-range solutions for certain internal control weaknesses we have previously reported regarding the process for preparing the consolidated financial statements. In April 2006, we reported[56] in greater detail on these issues and provided recommendations to OMB and Treasury. Resolving some of these internal control weaknesses will require a strong commitment from Treasury and OMB as they execute and implement their corrective action plans.

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[55] GFRS uses a closing package methodology that has been developed to capture each federal agency's information and link the agencies' audited financial statements to the governmentwide consolidated financial statements. See GAO, *Financial Management Systems: Lack of Disciplined Processes Puts Effective Implementation of Treasury's Governmentwide Financial Report System at Risk*, GAO-06-413 (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 21, 2006).

[56] GAO, *Financial Audit: Significant Internal Control Weaknesses Remain in Preparing the Consolidated Financial Statements of the U.S. Government*, GAO-06-415 (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 21, 2006).

Overcoming current challenges will be difficult, but after a decade of reporting at the governmentwide level perhaps now is an appropriate time to step back and consider the need for further revisions to the current federal financial reporting model, which would affect both consolidated and agency financial reporting. While the current reporting model recognizes some of the unique needs of the federal government, a broad reconsideration of the federal financial reporting model could address the following types of questions.

- What kind of information is most relevant and useful for a sovereign nation?
- Do traditional financial statements convey information in a transparent manner?
- What is the role of the balance sheet in the federal government reporting model?
- How should items that are unique to the federal government, such as social insurance commitments and the power to tax, be reported?

Engaging in a reevaluation of this nature could stimulate discussion that would bring about a new way of thinking about the federal government's financial and performance reporting needs. To understand various perceptions and needs of stakeholders for federal financial reporting, a wide variety of stakeholders from the public and private sector should be consulted. Ultimately, the goal of such a reevaluation would be reporting enhancements that can help the Congress deliberate strategies to address the federal government's challenges, including those of our growing long-term fiscal imbalance.

More specifically, we continue to support several specific improvements to federal financial reporting. For example, the federal government's financial reporting should be expanded to disclose the reasons for significant changes during the year in scheduled social insurance benefits and funding. It should also include a Statement of Fiscal Sustainability—providing a long-term look at the sustainability of current federal fiscal policy in the context of all major federal spending programs and tax policies. The reporting on fiscal sustainability should include additional information that will assist in understanding the sustainability of current social insurance and other federal programs, including key measures of fiscal sustainability and intergenerational equity,[57] projected annual cash flows, and changes in fiscal sustainability during the reporting period. We believe that such reporting needs to reflect the significant commitments associated with the Social Security and Medicare programs while recognizing a liability for the net assets (principally investments in special U.S. Treasury securities) of the "trust funds." We support the current efforts of the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB) to begin a project on fiscal sustainability reporting. In addition, an easily understandable summary annual report should be prepared and published that includes in a clear, concise, and transparent manner, key financial and performance information embodied in the *Financial Report*. Later in this statement, I offer other suggestions for improved reporting that will help in this regard.

Fiscal Stewardship Is an Increasingly Critical Challenge

Successfully addressing the six primary challenges I just described will undoubtedly help strengthen the federal government's financial and performance reporting and resolve many accountability and stewardship challenges. This will become increasingly important, because as I stated in our audit report included in the *Financial Report*, testified before the Congress, and emphasized in numerous speeches, the nation's current fiscal path is unsustainable and tough choices by the President and the Congress are necessary to address the nation's large and growing long-term fiscal imbalance.

The federal government's financial condition and fiscal outlook are worse than many may understand. We are currently experiencing strong economic growth and yet running large on-budget (operating) deficits that are largely unrelated to the Global War on Terrorism. Despite an increase in revenues in fiscal year 2006 of about $255 billion, the federal government reported that its costs exceeded its revenues by $450 billion (i.e., net operating cost) and that its cash outlays exceeded its cash receipts by $248 billion (i.e., unified budget deficit). Further, as of September 30, 2006, the U.S. government reported that it owed (i.e., liabilities) more than it owned (i.e., assets) by almost $9 trillion. In addition, the present value of the federal government's major reported long-term "fiscal exposures"—liabilities (e.g., debt), contingencies (e.g., insurance), and social insurance and other commitments and promises (e.g., Social Security, Medicare)—rose from about $20 trillion to over $50 trillion in the last 6 years.

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[57] Intergenerational equity assesses the extent to which different age groups may be required to assume financial burdens to sustain federal responsibilities.

The federal government faces large and growing structural deficits in the future due primarily to known demographic trends and rising health care costs. These structural deficits—which are virtually certain given the design of our current programs and policies—will mean escalating and ultimately unsustainable federal deficits and debt levels. Based on various measures—and using reasonable assumptions—the federal government's current fiscal policy is unsustainable.

The Long-Term Fiscal Outlook

In addition to considering the federal government's current financial condition, it is critical to look at other measures of the long-term fiscal outlook of the federal government. An evaluation of the nation's long-term fiscal outlook should include not only liabilities included in the *Financial Report* but also the implicit promises embedded in current policy and the timing of these longer-term obligations and commitments in relation to the resources available under various assumptions.

Over the next few decades, the nation's fiscal outlook will be shaped largely by known demographic trends and rising health care costs. As the baby-boom generation retires, federal spending on current retirement and health care programs—Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—will grow dramatically. A range of other federal fiscal commitments, some explicit and some representing implicit public expectations, also bind the nation's fiscal future. Absent policy changes, a growing imbalance between expected federal spending and tax revenues will mean escalating and ultimately unsustainable federal deficits and debt levels.

There are various ways to consider and assess the long-term fiscal outlook, including

- the Statement of Social Insurance,
- major reported long-term fiscal exposures, and
- long-term fiscal simulations.

Statement of Social Insurance. The Statement of Social Insurance in the *Financial Report* displays the present value of projected revenues and expenditures for scheduled benefits of certain benefit programs that are referred to as social insurance (e.g., Social Security, Medicare). For Social Security and Medicare alone, projected expenditures for scheduled benefits for the next 75 years exceed earmarked revenues (e.g., dedicated payroll taxes, premiums, and existing government bonds in the trust funds) for the same period by approximately $39 trillion in present value terms. Stated differently, one would need approximately $39 trillion invested today to deliver on the currently promised benefits for the next 75 years. Table 1 shows a simplified version of the Statement of Social Insurance by its primary components.

Table 1: Simplified Statement of Social Insurance as of January 1, 2006

Dollars in trillions

	Social Security	Medicare Hospital Insurance (Part A)	Medicare Supplementary Medical Insurance – Part B	Medicare Supplementary Medical Insurance – Part D	Total
Present value of future revenue (earmarked contributions, taxes, and premiums)	$32	$11	$5	$2	$50
Present value of expenditures for scheduled future benefits[a]	(39)	(22)	(18)	(10)	(89)
Present value of future expenditures in excess of future revenue[b]	($7)	($11)	($13)	($8)	($39)

Source: The Department of the Treasury.

[a] These amounts include administrative expenses for the programs.

[b] Under current law, Social Security and Federal Hospital Insurance (Medicare Part A) payments are limited to amounts available to the respective trust funds.

Note: Data are from the fiscal year 2006 *Financial Report*.

Major Reported Long-Term Fiscal Exposures. GAO developed the concept of "fiscal exposures" to provide a framework for considering the wide range of responsibilities, programs, and activities that explicitly or implicitly expose the federal government to future spending.

The concept of fiscal exposures is meant to provide a broader perspective on long-term costs. Major reported long-term fiscal exposures in fiscal year 2006 with a present value totaling over $50 trillion consisted of $10 trillion of liabilities reported on the Balance Sheet, $1 trillion of other commitments and contingencies, and the $39 trillion of social insurance responsibilities, the last two of which are reported elsewhere in the *Financial Report.* This $50 trillion compares to about $20 trillion in fiscal year 2000.

These large numbers are difficult to comprehend. Table 2 seeks to translate them into several figures and ratios that are more understandable.

Table 2: Understanding the Size of Major Reported Fiscal Exposures

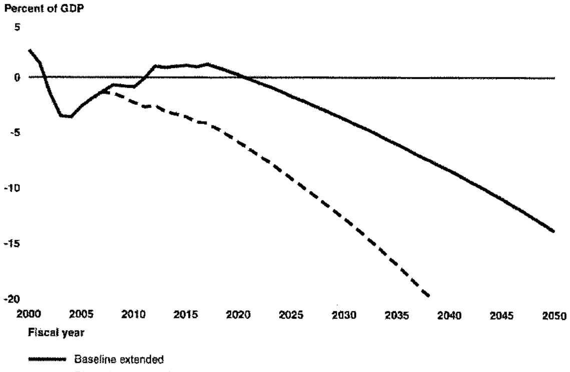
	2000	2006	Percentage increase
Major fiscal exposures	$20.4 trillion	$50.5 trillion	147%
Total household net worth	$42.0 trillion	$53.3 trillion	27%
Ratio of fiscal exposures to net worth	49 percent	95 percent	94%
Burden			
Per person	$70,000	$170,000	132%
Per full-time worker	$165,000	$400,000	143%
Per household	$190,000	$440,000	134%
Income			
Median household income	$41,990	$46,326	10%
Disposable personal income per capita	$25,127	$31,519	25%
Ratio of household burden to median income	4.5	9.5	112%

Sources: GAO analysis of data from the Department of the Treasury, Federal Reserve Board, U.S. Census Bureau, and Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Note: Percentage increases reflect actual data and may differ from calculation of rounded numbers presented in table.

Long-Term Fiscal Simulations. Another way to assess the U.S. government's long-term fiscal outlook and the sustainability of federal programs is to run simulations of future revenues and costs for all federal programs, based on a continuation of current or proposed policy. The simulations GAO has published since 1992 are designed to do that. As shown in figure 1, GAO's long-term simulations—which are neither forecasts nor predictions—continue to show ever-increasing long-term deficits resulting in a federal debt level that ultimately spirals out of control. The timing of deficits and the resulting debt buildup varies depending on the assumptions used, but under either optimistic ("Baseline extended") or more realistic assumptions, the federal government's current fiscal policy is unsustainable.

Figure 1: Unified Surpluses and Deficits as a Share of GDP under Alternative Fiscal Policy Simulations

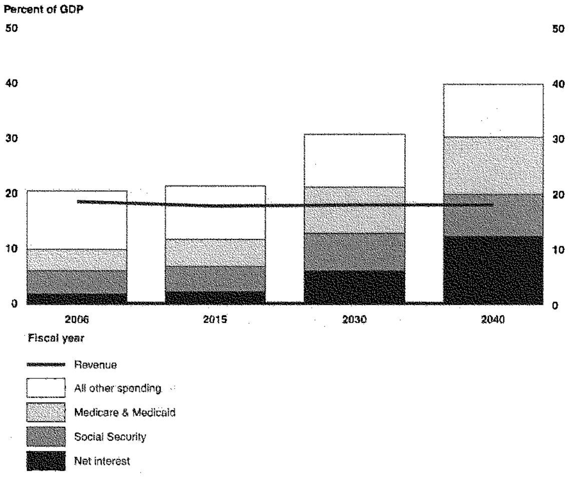


Source: GAO's January 2007 analysis.

Over the long term, the nation's growing fiscal imbalance stems primarily from the aging of the population and rising health care costs. Absent significant changes on the spending or revenue sides of the budget or both, these long-term deficits will encumber a growing share of federal resources and test the capacity of current and future generations to afford both today's and tomorrow's commitments. Continuing on this unsustainable path will gradually erode, if not suddenly damage, our economy, our standard of living, and ultimately our domestic tranquility and national security.

If, for example, as shown in figure 2, it is assumed that recent tax reductions are made permanent and discretionary spending keeps pace with the growth of our economy, our long-term simulations suggest that by 2040 federal revenues may be adequate to pay little more than interest on debt held by the public and some Social Security benefits. Neither slowing the growth in discretionary spending nor allowing the tax provisions, including the tax cuts enacted in 2001 and 2003, to expire—nor both together—would eliminate the imbalance.

Figure 2: Potential Fiscal Outcomes under Alternative Simulation: Discretionary Spending Grows with GDP after 2007 and All Expiring Tax Provisions Are Extended



Source: GAO's January 2007 analysis.

Note: Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) exemption amount is retained at the 2006 level through 2017 and expiring tax provisions are extended. After 2017, revenue as a share of GDP is held constant—implicitly assuming that action is taken to offset increased revenue from real bracket creep, the AMT, and tax-deferred retirement accounts.

At some point, action will need to be taken to change the nation's fiscal course. The sooner appropriate actions are taken, the sooner the miracle of compounding will begin to work for the federal budget rather than against it. Conversely, the longer that action to deal with the nation's long-term fiscal outlook is delayed, the greater the risk that the eventual changes will be disruptive and destabilizing. Acting sooner rather than later will give us more time to phase in gradual changes, while also providing more time for those likely to be most affected to make compensatory changes.

The "fiscal gap" is a quantitative measure of long-term fiscal imbalance. Under GAO's more realistic simulation, assuming debt held by the public remains at the current share of the economy (i.e., GDP), closing the fiscal gap would require spending cuts or tax increases equal to 8 percent of the entire economy each year over the next 75 years, or a total of about $61 trillion in present value terms. To put this in perspective, closing the gap would require an immediate and permanent increase in federal tax revenues of more than 40 percent or an equivalent reduction in federal program spending (i.e., in all spending except for interest on the debt held by the public, which cannot be directly controlled).

A Possible Way Forward

Although the long-term fiscal outlook is driven primarily by rising health care costs and known demographics, we cannot ignore other government programs and activities. There is a need to engage in a fundamental review, reprioritization, and reengineering of the base of government. Aligning the federal government to meet the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities of the 21st century will require a fundamental review of what the federal government does, how it does it, and how it is financed. Many of the federal government's current policies, programs, functions, and activities are based on conditions that existed decades ago, are not results-based, and are not well aligned with 21st century realities. We need to address the growing costs of the major entitlement programs and also review and reexamine all other major programs, policies, and activities on both the spending and the revenue side of the budget. Programs that run through the tax code—sometimes referred to as tax expenditures[58]—must be reexamined along with those that run through the spending side. As we move forward, the federal government needs to start making tough choices in setting priorities and linking resources and activities to results.

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[58] In addition to the reported net cost, the federal government foregoes tax revenues as a result of preferential provisions, such as tax exclusions, credits, and deductions. These revenue losses are referred to as tax expenditures.

Meeting our nation's large, growing, and structural fiscal imbalance will require a multipronged approach:

- increasing transparency and enhancing the relevancy of key financial, performance, and budget reporting and estimates to highlight our long-term fiscal challenges;
- reinstituting and strengthening budget controls for both spending and tax policies to deal with both near-term and longer-term deficits;
- strengthening oversight of programs and activities, including creating approaches to better facilitate the discussion of integrated solutions to crosscutting issues; and
- reengineering and reprioritizing the federal government's existing programs, policies, and activities to address 21st century challenges and capitalize on related opportunities.

In my January 2007 testimony,[59] I proposed a number of ideas for consideration to improve the transparency of long-term costs. In November 2006, I provided the congressional leadership with recommendations, based on the work of GAO, for consideration for the agenda of the 110th Congress.[60] These recommendations focused on three areas: (1) targets for near-term oversight, (2) policies and programs that are in need of fundamental reform and reengineering, and (3) governance issues. One of the areas I pointed out that warranted congressional attention was the development of a portfolio of outcome-based key national indicators (e.g., economic, security, social, environmental) to help measure progress toward national outcomes, assess conditions and trends, and help communicate complex issues. The Congress could take a leadership role in highlighting the need for a U.S. national indicator system to inform strategic planning, enhance performance and accountability reporting, inform congressional oversight and decision making, and stimulate greater citizen engagement. In my view, this should include consideration of a public/private partnership to help make this key concept a reality sooner rather than later.

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[59] GAO, *Long-term Budget Outlook: Saving Our Future Requires Tough Choices Today*, GAO-07-342T (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 11, 2007).

[60] GAO, *Suggested Areas for Oversight for the 110th Congress*, GAO-07-235R (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 17, 2006).

In order to effectively address our long-term fiscal imbalance, fundamental reform of existing entitlement programs is essential. However, entitlement reform alone will not get the job done. We also need to reprioritize and constrain other federal government spending and generate more revenues—hopefully through a reformed tax system. GAO's *21st Century Challenges: Reexamining the Base of the Federal Government*[61] contains a suggested list of specific federal activities for reexamination, illustrative reexamination questions, and perspectives on various strategies, processes, and approaches for congressional consideration stemming from our audit and evaluation work that can be used in reexamining the federal base. Answers to these questions may draw on the work of GAO and others; however, only elected officials can and should decide which issues to address as well as how and when to address them. Addressing these problems will require tough choices, and our fiscal clock is ticking. As a result, the time to start is now, to help save our future.

Concluding Remarks

In closing, given the federal government's current financial condition and growing long-term fiscal imbalance, the need for the Congress and the President to have timely, reliable, and useful financial and performance information is greater than ever. Sound decisions on the current results and future direction of vital federal government programs and policies are more difficult without such information. Until the problems discussed in this testimony are effectively addressed, they will continue to have adverse implications for the federal government and the taxpayers.

Since enactment of federal financial management reform legislation, we have seen continuous movement toward the ultimate goals of accountability laid out in the different financial management statutes. While early on some were skeptical, these laws have dramatically changed how financial management is carried out and the value placed on good financial management across government. Across government, financial management improvement initiatives are underway, and if effectively implemented, have the potential to greatly improve the quality of financial management information as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of agency operations. By the end of my term as Comptroller General, I would like to see the civilian CFO Act agencies routinely producing not only annual financial statements that can pass the scrutiny of a financial audit, but also quarterly financial statements and other meaningful financial and performance data to help guide decision makers on a day-to-day basis. For DOD, my expectations are not as high given the current status of DOD's financial management practices, yet it is realistic for at least major portions of DOD's financial information to become auditable by the end of my term. Moreover, progress on developing meaningful financial and performance reporting on the federal government will be a key area that I will continue to champion. I am determined to do whatever I can to help ensure that we are not the first generation to leave our children and grandchildren a legacy of failed fiscal stewardship and the hardships that would bring.

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[61] GAO, *21st Century Challenges: Reexamining the Base of the Federal Government*, GAO-05-325SP (Washington, D.C.: February 2005).

Finally, I want to emphasize the value of sustained congressional interest in these issues, as demonstrated by this Subcommittee's leadership. It will be key that going forward, the appropriations, budget, authorizing, and oversight committees hold agency top leadership accountable for resolving the remaining problems and that they support improvement efforts that address the challenges for the future I highlighted today. The federal government has made tremendous progress, and sustained congressional attention has been and will continue to be a critical factor to ensuring achievement of the goals and objectives of management reform legislation.

Mr. Chairman, this completes my prepared statement and I want to thank you for the opportunity to participate in this hearing and for the strong support of this Subcommittee in addressing the need for financial management reform and accountability. I would be happy to respond to any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have at this time.

Contacts and Acknowledgments

For information about this statement, please contact Jeffrey C. Steinhoff, Managing Director, Financial Management and Assurance, at (202) 512-2600 or McCoy Williams, Director, Financial Management and Assurance, at (202) 512-9095 or williamsm1@gao.gov. Individuals who made key contributions to this testimony include Felicia Brooks, Robert Dacey, Kay Daly, Francine DelVecchio, Gary Engel, Susan Irving, Jay McTigue, Diane Morris, and Paula Rascona. Numerous other individuals made contributions to the GAO reports cited in this testimony.

Testimony of the Honorable Linda M. Combs
Controller
Office of Management and Budget

before the

Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs

March 1, 2007

There may be no more important responsibility of government than to act as an effective steward of the taxpayers' money. It is therefore no surprise that the President has made improving financial performance one of his top management priorities. With the launch of the President's Management Agenda (PMA) in 2001, the President issued a "call to action" for Federal managers to achieve a series of critical financial management goals that, if attained, would help American citizens gauge whether "the people's money" is being properly accounted for and wisely spent, increase transparency into the fiscal health of the Federal Government, and provide reliable financial information to be used by Federal leaders to manage the day-to-day operations of the government more efficiently.

With the rising costs of entitlement programs expected to create an unprecedented and enormous fiscal imbalance for the Federal Government in the coming decades, achieving our financial management goals is more critical today than any other time in our nation's history. The financial management community is not only responsible for reporting on the extent and nature of our fiscal challenges, it also plays a critical role in developing and implementing strategies to control Federal spending and otherwise ensure that the fiscal health of the Federal Government remains sound.

I am pleased to report that the Federal financial community is well positioned to meet these challenges, having achieved significant forward progress on all the key indicators of the PMA initiatives related to financial management. Specifically, in fiscal year (FY) 2006:

- Nineteen major agencies, representing more than 75% of all Federal outlays, achieved a clean audit opinion.
- The number of auditor-reported material weaknesses was reduced by approximately 15% (from 48 reported in FY 2005 to 41 reported this past year).
- For the second consecutive year, every major Federal agency issued their audited financial statements within 45 days of the close of the fiscal year. Prior to 2001, some of

these major Federal agencies took as long as five months to complete their financial reports.

- Improper payments declined to $36.3 billion for those programs that originally reported a total of $45.1 billion in FY 2004. This represents an approximate $9 billion improvement in 2 years.
- The Federal Government has disposed of more than $4.2 billion in excess real property since FY 2004.

It is now incumbent upon the Federal community to build on this foundation of progress so that we are prepared to address the fiscal challenges that lie ahead. Federal managers must continue to mobilize resources and re-dedicate efforts to strengthen accounting practices, implement stronger internal controls, issue financial reports more timely, eliminate instances of error and waste, and use financial data to manage costs. Also, we must approach these management improvement activities with an eye towards balancing the costs of our efforts against the benefits they ultimately derive for the taxpayer. Stated simply, we must not spend $2 on our management improvement efforts if the return to the taxpayer is only $1.

As we set out to achieve new and better levels of financial performance, and do so in a cost-effective manner, it is critical that the Federal financial community orient itself around a common set of priorities, an agreed upon plan for action, and a clear and consistent roadmap for improvement. Therefore, pursuant to the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 (CFO Act), the Office of Federal Financial Management (OFFM) within the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has published the "2007 Federal Financial Management Report – A Framework for Improving Financial Performance." The Framework, released in January of 2007, is intended to provide the public with a simple reporting tool for identifying: (1) The PMA – How We Define and Measure Financial Management Success; (2) Reform Activities – Priority Financial Management Initiatives that Support PMA Objectives; and (3) Core Activities – The Foundation of Effective Financial Management.

The PMA

When the CFO Act was signed into law more than 15 years ago, the Federal Government was responding to numerous financial management challenges. The Comptroller General at the time had testified that billions of dollars were "at risk" in the Federal Government's programs due to inadequate financial management systems and controls. Agencies generally could not give assurance that their financial statements were accurate and reliable, as only one agency was able to achieve a clean audit opinion in the Act's first year of implementation.

The CFO Act was a direct response to these deficiencies and was aimed toward reforming financial management practices within the Federal Government. The Act called for stronger financial leadership, more disciplined financial controls, improved financial management systems, and accurate and timely financial information for decision-making. If implemented effectively, the reform environment created by law, administrative action, and executive order provides a solid foundation for continual improvements in the Federal Government's stewardship of the public's tax dollars. The primary instrument used by the Administration to implement the principles of the CFO Act and other Federal financial management laws is the Improving Financial Performance Initiative of the PMA. Under this initiative, the President identified a limited number of clear, meaningful, and attainable financial goals that every Federal agency must meet. Each individual goal is an indicator of financial management excellence, and reflects standards established either by law or Administrative action.

As a primary goal, every agency CFO is responsible for meeting standards that reflect a sound foundation of Federal financial management: achieving a "clean" audit, resolving material weaknesses in a timely manner, implementing and/or maintaining a financial system that meets Federal standards, meeting reporting deadlines, and complying with laws and regulations. These standards ensure that Federal agencies are properly accounting for taxpayer dollars and can produce financial information that is both timely and reliable. Federal agencies must achieve these standards to move from "red" to "yellow" status on the PMA stop light scorecard system. To achieve a "green" status score, CFOs must build on the "yellow" standards by ensuring that financial information is available for managers on demand and is actively being used to drive results in key areas of operations.

In addition to the Improving Financial Performance Initiative, the President has also established additional PMA initiatives to eliminate improper payments and right-size the Federal Government's real estate. The accompanying table demonstrates the key goals for the financial management-related PMA initiatives, with the corresponding FY 2006 results and 5-year performance targets.

PMA GOALS, RESULTS & TARGETS

PMA GOALS	FY 2006 RESULTS	FY 2011 PERFORMANCE TARGETS
Increase # of Clean Audit Opinions	**19 of 24 CFO Act Agencies w/ Clean Opinion**	**22 of 24 CFO Act Agencies w/ Clean Opinion**
Reduce # of Material Weaknesses (MW)	**15% Reduction in Auditor MWs from Prior Year**	**50% Elimination of all Current Government-wide MWs**
Timely Financial Reporting	**All Agencies Report w/in 45 Days**	**All Agencies Report w/in 45 Days**
Dispose of Excess Real Property	**$4.2 Billion in Excess Property Disposed of Since 2004**	**$11 Billion in Excess Property Disposed**
Eliminate Improper Payments (IP)	**$9 Billion IP Reduction from 2004 Base**	**$20 Billion IP Reduction from 2004 Base**

As a result of the PMA, every CFO across the Federal Government now shares common goals for improving financial performance, and a financial management community exists that works closely with one another to respond to long-standing and arising financial challenges. As OMB, Federal CFOs, and the larger financial management community look toward the next 5 years of financial management improvements, the PMA will continue to guide our efforts.

Reform and Core Activities

To support the PMA, the Federal financial community has undertaken a series of reforms intended to strengthen key areas of financial management and thus help ensure the PMA's success. These activities include improving and/or strengthening: internal controls, financial systems, payment accuracy, real property management, grants management, and financial reporting for the government as a whole (including enhanced reporting on social insurance programs and the sustainability of the government's finances over time). To ensure the Federal community has a common understanding of what we are trying to accomplish, OMB's Framework for Improving Financial Performance establishes an overarching strategic goal, a 5-year performance target, short-term objectives, and priority actions for the coming year.

The Federal financial community also undertakes a myriad of day-to-day activities or core functions that are necessary to effectively manage the resources of the Federal Government. These activities include improving, strengthening, and monitoring financial systems and reports, internal controls, auditing standards, and asset and grants management. In collaboration with the financial management community, OFFM works to ensure that the government-wide policies and requirements that drive our core activities are user friendly, transparent, consistently complied with by Federal agencies, and facilitate improved financial management without undue burden on agency and taxpayer resources.

Of equal importance to the transparency and clarity of the Framework, the reform and core activities within the Framework will help position the financial management community to meet the fiscal challenges that face our nation today. Due to the expected growth of Social Security, Medicare, and other entitlement programs, the Federal Government faces an imbalance of more than $40 trillion over the next 75 years. Our efforts to strengthen government-wide reporting (including on social insurance programs) will ensure that policymakers and the public have comprehensive data on the sustainability of the government's finances that facilitates and guides entitlement reform efforts and other decisions on Federal spending. To this end, Director Portman sent a copy of the United States 2006 Consolidated Financial Report to every member of Congress on December 15, 2006, and also published it on the front page of OMB's website. In addition, OMB's efforts to work with the financial management community to strengthen internal controls, reduce payment errors, and manage our assets more efficiently, will help control costs in an environment where Federal resources for non-entitlement programs will become increasingly scarce.

Moving Forward Through Smarter, Stronger, and Sustainable Accountability

While we have made significant progress since the enactment of the CFO Act in 1990 and are executing a sound and transparent strategic plan, much remains to be done before the government can say that it has achieved the level of financial management for which we are striving. As we move forward on our plan, we will increase the reliability and transparency of the government's financial information while placing special emphasis on the principle that our improvement activities must have a positive return on investment for the taxpayer.

To this end, the CFO Council (CFOC) and the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency (PCIE) are currently joining forces to improve the cost-effectiveness of how we go about producing audited financial statements. The presentation of our financial data should be understandable and useful without becoming an excessive cost and drain on agency resources. The CFOC and PCIE will work together with the larger financial community and the Congress to determine if we are sharing the right information with the Government's stakeholders, if the data are timely and in the right format for decision making, and if there is an appropriate amount of audit scrutiny and precision of the data in the Government's reporting. By improving the cost-effectiveness of our current activities, we will empower our financial leaders to expand their focus beyond clean audits and material weakness resolution into other critical areas of fiscal responsibility, such as the reporting of the full costs of Federal programs and activities so that Federal managers have better information to make key business decisions.

Every tax dollar is too precious not to make well-informed decisions. This Administration looks forward to continuing our partnership with Congress to pursue fiscal health by holding agencies accountable, improving financial management through the PMA, addressing our long-term fiscal challenges, and striving for stronger, smarter, and sustainable accountability. We will build on our current successes, maintain and enhance our day-to-day (core) activities, and incorporate reform initiatives to move every agency to financial management excellence and to "green" status on the PMA stop light scorecard. We will be strategic with the financial management policies we set and how we manage our programs in order to account for and wisely spend "the people's money."

MEMORANDUM

TO:	Members of the Senate Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security
FROM:	Subcommittee Majority Staff
DATE:	February 27, 2007
SUBJECT:	March 1, 2007 Subcommittee Hearing

Overview

The Subcommittee will be holding a hearing his coming Thursday, March 1st, at 3:00 PM entitled "Improving Federal Financial Management: Progress Made and the Challenges Ahead." The hearing will focus on the improvements made in federal financial management over the years, particularly since the passage of the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 (CFO ACT). It will also examine the accomplishments and goals discussed in the 2007 Federal Financial Management Report recently issued by OMB's Office of Federal Financial Management (OFFM). The OFFM report can be found here:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/financial/reports/fy07_5yr_plan.pdf

There will be two witnesses Thursday:

David M. Walker, Comptroller General of the United States, GAO
Linda M. Combs, Controller, OFFM

Background

GAO has testified in the past that basic financial management was simply not a priority at most federal agencies prior to the passage of the CFO Act.[1] Audited financial statements were not required and there were numerous disclosures of fraud, waste, and abuse government-wide due to poor financial controls and a lack of financial transparency. Congress responded with the CFO Act.

A major part of the CFO Act was the creation of a permanent financial management leadership structure within OMB and throughout the federal government. The legislation created two new positions within OMB: the Deputy Director of Management and the Controller, who heads the OFFM. The legislation also created 24 Chief Financial Officers for the major departments and agencies within the federal government.

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[1] GAO, *CFO Act of 1990: Driving the Transformation of Federal Financial Management*, GAO-06-242T

Each of the 24 CFOs must have some background in financial management. They are responsible for all of their agency's financial activities, including the development of agency-wide financial and accounting procedures and the compilation and filing of annual audited financial statements. CFOs also serve on the Chief Financial Officers Council, which is chaired by OMB's Deputy Director for Management.

Progress Made

The CFO Act is credited with creating for the first time within the federal government a professional and qualified financial management leadership structure that can impose sound financial management practices and systems within and across agencies. The more professional nature of financial management at federal agencies is evidenced in the accomplishments laid out in OMB's 2007 Federal Financial Management Report:

- For the second year in a row in FY 2006, every major federal agency filed their audited financial statement within 45 days of the end of the fiscal year. In previous years, it has taken some agencies six months or more to do this.
- Nineteen major agencies – accounting for more than 75 percent of total outlays – received a clean opinion on their financial statements. Only one agency received a clean audit opinion before the CFO Act was being debated.
- The number of auditor-reported material weaknesses has continued to decline across the federal government. Forty eight material weaknesses were reported in FY 2005. Forty one were reported in FY 2006.

OMB aims to enforce compliance with sound financial practices through the President's Management Agenda (PMA), which annually grades agencies in a number of areas. Under the PMA's "Improving Financial Performance" initiative, agencies must meet a number of standards: achieving a clean audit; resolving material weaknesses in a timely manner; having a financial system in place that meets OMB standards; meeting reporting deadlines, and; complying with financial management-related laws and regulations. Agencies that achieve these standards move from a "red" PMA score for financial management, the lowest possible score, to a "yellow" score, which is in the middle. Agencies that build on these standards by demonstrating that managers have access to timely financial information and use it in day-to-day decision making can receive a "green" score, the highest. GAO has praised the PMA's "Improving Financial Performance" initiative for adding new momentum to efforts to improve federal financial management.[2]

OMB also has PMA initiatives on eliminating improper payments and disposing of excess Federal property. On improper payments, OMB reported in the 2007 Federal Financial Management Report that improper payments in FY 2006 were reduced by $9 billion from $45 billion in FY 2004, when improper payments estimates were first reported. Additional improper payments have been identified over the same period of time, however, so the official government wide improper payments estimate is still about $41 billion. On excess property, OMB reported that $1.5 billion in assets have been disposed of through FY 2006.

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[2] GAO, *CFO Act of 1990: Driving the Transformation of Federal Financial Management*, GAO-06-242T

Remaining Challenges

OMB's 2007 Federal Financial Management Report also lays out goals the Administration hopes to meet in the area of financial management over the next five years, through 2011. They hope to have all agencies continue to get their audited financial statements completed on time and to increase the number of agencies with clean audit opinions from 19 to 22. They also plan for an additional ten percent decrease in auditor-reported material weaknesses by 2011. On improper payments, OMB plans to have a further $25 billion reduction in reported improper payments from the $45 billion initially reported in FY 2004. On excess property, OMB plans to dispose of an additional $11 billion in Federal assets

General Walker will likely comment on OMB's five-year goals in his testimony tomorrow. In the past, GAO has testified that – despite the improvements in federal financial management over the year - there are five major challenges remaining.[3]

1. Modernizing Financial Systems – GAO has found that many agencies still do not have financial systems that can give agency leadership all of the financial information they need for managing performance, making accurate reports, and making informed decisions. A number of agencies are still not in compliance with the basic financial management system standards laid out in the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act.[4]
2. Improving Financial Reporting – In the area of financial reporting, GAO has found that, while agencies are reporting in a timely manner and more and more are receiving clean audit opinions, a number of agencies have had to restate their financial statements in recent years. GAO has also argued that agency financial reports do not provide sufficient information necessary to gauge agencies' long-term financial position.
3. Building a Financial Management Workforce for the Future – GAO has found that the majority of the federal financial management workforce performs clerical and technical work on a day-to-day basis and do not have the kind of analytical skills that will be needed in the coming years.
4. Addressing Internal Control Weaknesses – GAO has noted each year since it began auditing the consolidated government-wide financial statement that the federal government continues to have a number of material weaknesses that can lead to waste and a lack of transparency.
5. Continuity of Leadership – GAO has argued that, while all three administrations that have served since the passage of the CFO Act have been supportive of financial management improvements, the work remaining will not be completed soon. It is important, they argue, that the commitment to the reforms in the CFO Act and in other pieces of legislation.

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[3] GAO, *CFO Act of 1990: Driving the Transformation of Federal Financial Management*, GAO-06-242T

[4] GAO, *Financial Management: Improvements Under Way but Serious Financial Systems Problems Persist*, GAO-06-970

GAO
Accountability * Integrity * Reliability

Comptroller General
of the United States

United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548

February 7, 2007

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Skelton:

In response to a request you made at your January 18th hearing on stabilizing and rebuilding Iraq, I am providing you with a definition of waste. I am transmitting this on behalf of myself and the three other representatives of the Inspectors General community who testified at the hearing.

Please call me if you have any further questions about our definition, and I look forward to supporting the Committee's future oversight agenda.

Sincerely yours,

David M. Walker
Comptroller General
of the United States

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Stuart Bowen, Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction
Mr. Thomas Gimble, Inspector General, Department of Defense
Mr. Howard Krongard, Inspector General, Department of State

DEFINITION OF WASTE
2/5/07

Generic Definition:

Waste involves the taxpayers as a whole not receiving reasonable value for money in connection with any government funded activities due to an inappropriate act or omission by players with control over or access to government resources (e.g., executive, judicial or legislative branch employees, contractors, grantees or other recipients). Importantly, waste represents a transgression that is less than fraud and abuse and most waste does not involve a violation of law. Rather, waste relates primarily to mismanagement, inappropriate actions or inadequate oversight.

Examples:

Illustrative examples of waste in the acquisitions and contracting area could include:

- Unreasonable, unrealistic, inadequate or frequently changing requirements.
- Proceeding with development or production of systems without achieving an adequate maturity of related technologies in situations where there is no compelling national security interest to do so.
- Failure to use competitive bidding in appropriate circumstances.
- Over-reliance on cost-plus contracting arrangements where reasonable alternatives are available.
- Payment of incentive and award fees in circumstances where the contractor's performance, in terms of cost, schedule and quality outcomes, does not justify such fees.
- Failure to engage in selected pre-contracting activities for contingent events (e.g., hurricanes, military conflicts)
- Congressional directions (e.g., earmarks), and agency spending actions where the action would not otherwise be taken based on an objective value and risk assessment and considering available resources.

United States Government Accountability Office

GAO

Report to Congressional Committees

March 2007

DEFENSE ACQUISITIONS

Assessments of Selected Weapon Programs

GAO

Accountability * Integrity * Reliability

GAO-07-406SP

GAO

Highlights

[illegible]

Why GAO Did This Study

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

March 2007

DEFENSE ACQUISITIONS

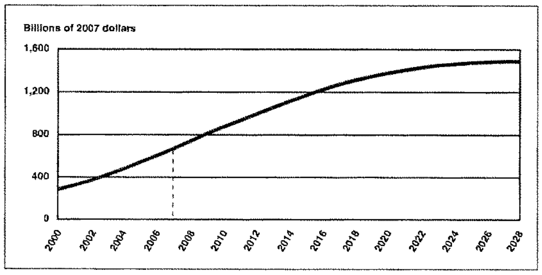
Assessments of Selected Weapon Programs

What GAO Found

GAO assessed 62 weapon systems with a total investment of over $950 billion, some two-thirds of the $1.5 trillion DOD plans for weapons acquisition (see below). Several of these programs will be developed without needed technology, design, and production knowledge, and will cost more and take longer to deliver. Progress in acquisitions is measured by passage through critical junctures, or knowledge points: Are the product's technologies mature at the start of development? Is the product design stable at the design review? Are production processes in control by production start? By these best practice measures, limited progress has been made by the programs GAO assessed. Fully mature technologies were present in 16 percent of the systems at development start—the point at which best practices indicate mature levels should be present. The programs that began development with immature technologies experienced a 32.3 percent cost increase, whereas those that began with mature technologies increased 2.6 percent. Furthermore, 27 percent of the assessed programs demonstrated a stable design at the time of design review and in terms of production, very few programs reported using statistical process control data to measure the maturity of production processes.

Effective program management and control are essential to executing a knowledge-based approach. However, DOD does not have an environment that facilitates effective program management. For example, key personnel are rotated too frequently. Further, DOD is increasingly relying on contractors to perform key management functions raising questions about the capacity of DOD to manage new weapon system programs.

Total Cumulative Planned Expenditures on Current Portfolio of Major Defense Acquisition Programs



Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

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Abbreviations

AMRAAM	AIM-120 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile
ASDS	Advanced SEAL Delivery System
ATIRCM/CMWS	Advanced Threat Infrared Countermeasure/Common Missile Warning System
BFVS	Bradley Fighting Vehicle System
CAVES WAA	conformal acoustic velocity sensor wide aperture array
CEC	Cooperative Engagement Capability
DOD	Department of Defense
FBCB2	Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below
FMTV	Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles
FY	fiscal year
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GBS	Global Broadcast Service
GPS	Global Positioning System
HIMARS	High Mobility Artillery Rocket System
JASSM	Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile
JLENS	Joint Land Attack Cruise Missile Defense Elevated Netted Sensor System
JPATS	Joint Primary Aircraft Training System
JPEO	Joint Program Executive Office
JSOW	Joint Standoff Weapon
MDA	Missile Defense Agency
MDAP	Major Defense Acquisition Program
MEADS	Medium Extended Air Defense System
MIDS-LVT	Multifunctional Information Distribution System – Low Volume Terminal
MLRS	Multiple Launch Rocket System
MM III GRP	Minuteman III Guidance Replacement Program
MM III PRP	Minuteman III Propulsion Replacement Program
MP-RTIP	Multi-Platform Radar Technology Insertion Program
MUE	Modernized User Equipment
NA	not applicable
NAS	National Airspace System
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
R&D	research and development
RDT&E	Research, Development, Test and Evaluation
SAR	Selected Acquisition Report
SBX	Sea-Based X-Band
SDD	System Development and Demonstration
TBD	to be determined

TRL	Technology Readiness Level
UAS	Unmanned Aircraft System
USMC	U.S. Marine Corps
U.S.C.	United States Code

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Comptroller General
of the United States

United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

March 30, 2007

Congressional Committees

This is our fifth annual assessment of selected Department of Defense (DOD) weapon programs. The breadth of this assessment gives us insights into a broad range of programs as well as the overall direction of weapon system acquisitions. Our analysis of individual weapon systems is grounded in best practices for attaining high levels of product knowledge in the areas of technology, design, and production. We find that new programs continue to move through development without sufficient knowledge, thereby resulting in cost increases and schedule delays. The link between knowledge and cost is real and predictable. It provides three choices for decision makers: (1) accept the status quo, (2) demonstrate high knowledge levels before approving individual programs, or (3) increase cost estimates to accurately reflect the consequences of insufficient knowledge.

This report also provides decision makers with an analysis of cumulative DOD weapon system investment and buying power. Although DOD has doubled its planned investment in major weapon systems from $750 billion to $1.5 trillion since 2001, unanticipated cost growth has reduced the return on this investment. The investment level itself represents a significant policy choice, since during that same period, the government's total liabilities and unfunded commitments have increased from about $20 trillion to about $50 trillion. The nation's fiscal exposures increase every day due to known demographic trends, continuing operating deficits, and compounding interest costs. Given the federal fiscal outlook, what was once a desire to deliver high-quality products on time and within budget has become an imperative. DOD simply must maximize its return on investment to provide the warfighter with needed capabilities and the best value for the taxpayer. With over $880 billion remaining to invest in the current portfolio of major systems, the status quo is both unacceptable and unsustainable.

Recognizing this dilemma, DOD has embraced best practices in its policies, instilled more discipline in requirements setting, strengthened training for program managers, and reorganized offices that support and oversee programs. Yet this intention has not been fully implemented and it has not had a material effect on weapon system programs. To translate policy into better programs, several additional elements are essential, including having a sound business case for each program that focuses on real needs and embodies best practices, sound business arrangements, and clear lines of responsibility and accountability. DOD must think strategically, separate wants from needs, and make tough choices. Specifically, enforcing stated DOD policy on individual acquisitions will require DOD to have the will and the congressional support to say "no" to programs that do not measure up, to recognize and reward savings, and to hold appropriate parties accountable for poor outcomes. This does not mean that no risks should be taken or that all problems can be foreseen and prevented. Nor is it necessary for DOD to sacrifice its record of delivering the best weaponry in the world to U.S. forces. However, it is possible for DOD to continue to deliver the best weaponry at a reasonable cost and in a more timely manner. The taxpayers and our military forces deserve no less.

David M. Walker
Comptroller General
of the United States

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Washington, D.C. 20548

March 30, 2007

Congressional Committees

This report is GAO's fifth annual assessment of selected weapon programs. The Department of Defense (DOD) has doubled its planned investment in new weapon systems from approximately $750 billion in 2001 to almost $1.5 trillion in 2007. In the last 5 years, the number of major defense acquisition programs (MDAPs) in development has risen from 72 to 85, and systems are becoming increasingly complex in their interdependency and technological sophistication. Unfortunately, we have seen little change in acquisition outcomes over this same period. Although U.S. weapons are among the best in the world, the cost of developing a weapon system continues to often exceed estimates by tens or hundreds of millions of dollars. This, in turn, results in fewer quantities than initially planned for, delays in product delivery, and performance shortfalls. Not only is the buying power of the government reduced and opportunities to make other investments lost, but the warfighter receives less than promised. DOD is depending on the weapons currently under development to transform military operations for the 21st century. The size and scale of current planned investment necessitate better results than we have seen in the past.

The current fiscal environment presents challenges for DOD's plans to transform military operations. As the nation begins to address long-term fiscal imbalances, DOD is likely to encounter considerable pressure to reduce its investment in new weapons. DOD also faces pressures within its own budget as investment in new weapon systems competes with funds needed to replace equipment and sustain military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. To make more efficient use of scarce investment dollars, DOD needs to adhere to a knowledge-based approach to product development that centers on attaining high levels of knowledge in three elements: technology, design, and production. Higher levels of knowledge at program start enable better estimates of how much weapon systems will cost to finish and improve the likelihood that a program will stay within cost and on schedule. Building upon this knowledge—as the product proceeds through design and into production—further increases the likelihood that a program will stay within cost and schedule targets and deliver promised capabilities, thus enabling DOD to buy what was originally budgeted. Lack of knowledge in individual programs is amplified when the program is part of an interdependent network, as cost overruns and schedule delays reverberate across systems of related programs. Additionally, successful acquisition outcomes require that program managers have the capacity to make knowledge-driven development decisions. In the larger context, DOD needs to make changes in its requirements and budgeting processes that are consistent with getting the desired outcomes from the acquisition process.

In this report, we assess 62 programs that represent an investment of over $950 billion.[1] Our objective is twofold: to provide decision makers with a cross-cutting analysis of DOD weapon system investment and also to provide independent, knowledge-based assessments of how well DOD has attained knowledge for individual systems.

Programs were selected for individual assessment based on several factors, including (1) high dollar value, (2) stage in acquisition, and (3) congressional interest. The majority of the 62 programs covered in the report are considered major defense acquisition programs by DOD.[2]

Better Acquisition Outcomes Needed to Accomplish DOD Transformation Objectives in Current Fiscal Environment

Without improved acquisition outcomes, achieving DOD's transformation objectives will be difficult given the current fiscal environment. DOD is currently investing in weapon systems that it is depending on to transform military operations. While these weapon systems are expected to provide unprecedented capabilities, the cost and complexity to develop these new systems will be exceptional. However, the nation's long-term fiscal imbalances will likely place pressure on the affordability of DOD's planned investments. Without better acquisition outcomes, there is greater risk that DOD will not be able to achieve its transformation objectives.

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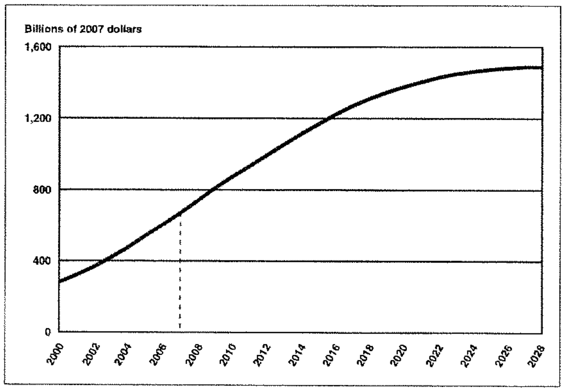
[1] This estimate includes total research, development, test and evaluation (RDT&E); procurement; military construction; and acquisition operation and maintenance appropriations to develop the weapon systems. The macro analyses contained in this report are based on data as of January 15, 2007, and may not reflect subsequent events.

[2] MDAPs are programs identified by DOD as programs that require eventual RDT&E expenditures of more than $365 million or $2.19 billion in procurement in fiscal year 2000 constant dollars.

DOD's Efforts to Transform Military Operations Expected to Be the Most Expensive and Complex Attempted

DOD is undertaking new efforts to fundamentally transform military operations that are expected to be the most expensive and complex ever. In the next 5 to 7 years, DOD plans to increase its investment in weapon systems that are key to this transformation. As figure 1 shows, DOD's total planned investment in major defense acquisition programs is almost $1.5 trillion (2007 dollars) for its current portfolio, with over $880 billion of that investment yet to be made.

Figure 1: Total Cumulative Planned Expenditures on Current Portfolio of Major Defense Acquisition Programs

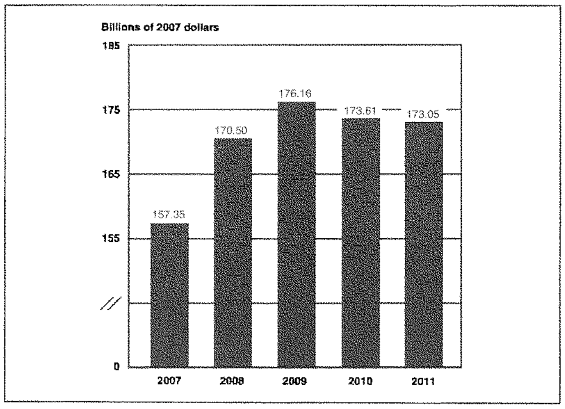


Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

Note: The MDA portion of investment data only goes through fiscal year 2011 and does not include full cost of developing MDA systems.

DOD's annual investment in the research, development, test and evaluation (RDT&E) and procurement of major weapon systems is expected to rise from $157 billion in 2007 to $173 billion in 2011(see fig. 2), peaking at approximately $195 billion in 2013.[3]

Figure 2: DOD's Projected Annual Investment in Procurement and Research, Development, Test and Evaluation of Weapon Systems



Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

The complexity of DOD's transformational efforts is especially evident in the development of several large megasystems, major weapon systems that depend on the integration of multiple systems—some of which are developed as separate programs—to achieve desired capabilities. This strategy often requires interdependent programs in concurrent development to be closely synchronized and managed, as they may, for example, depend on integrated architectures and common standards as a foundation for interoperability. If dependent systems are not available when needed, then a program could face cost increases, schedule delays, or reduced capabilities. Furthermore, the larger scope of development associated with these megasystems produces a much greater fiscal impact when cost and schedule estimates increase. Table 1 describes three of the department's largest and most complex megasystems that are currently under way.

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[3] Estimates for 2013 in constant 2007 dollars as reported by the Congressional Budget Office in "Long-Term Implications of Current Defense Plans: Summary Update for Fiscal Year 2007," pg. 13.

Table 1: Key Megasystems Currently in Development

Future Combat Systems (FCS)*	FCS* is a suite of manned and unmanned ground and air vehicles, sensors, and munitions linked by an information network that will enable warfighters to respond to threats with speed, precision, and lethality. FCS consists of 18 components and depends on numerous complimentary systems outside of FCS. For example, FCS is dependent on JTRS* and WIN-T* to provide key communication and networking capabilities that it requires to operate effectively. If these systems—which have both been fraught with cost, schedule, and performance problems of their own—are not available as planned, FCS may need to seek costly backup technologies, adjust its schedule, or accept reduced capabilities.
Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS)	BMDS consists of 10 elements that will work in concert to defeat enemy missiles launched from any range during any phase of their flight, including STSS*, GMD*, Aegis BMD*, ABL*, MKV*, KEI*, and THAAD*. While almost all of the elements will work separately, some sensor data must be shared among the elements for them to work in concert and for BMDS to provide full coverage against enemy missiles. For example, the Aegis BMD program provides long-range surveillance and tracking for the GMD system. While Aegis BMD's functionality has been successfully tested in several events, it has never been validated in an end-to-end flight test with the GMD system.
Global Information Grid (GIG)	The GIG is the cornerstone of DOD's net-centricity strategy. It is a system of interdependent systems that make up a secure, reliable network that enables users to access and share information at virtually any location and at any time. Five major programs are related to GIG's core network: TSAT*, JTRS*, GIG-Bandwidth Expansion, Network Centric Enterprise Services, and the Cryptography Transformation Initiative. Both JTRS* and TSAT* have recently been restructured due to—among other things—technical difficulties, complicating DOD's efforts to realize the GIG as planned.

Source: GAO.

Note: Programs with an asterisk are assessed in this report.

The Current Fiscal Environment Presents Challenges to Accomplishing DOD's Transformation Objectives

The nation's long-term fiscal imbalances will likely place pressure on the affordability of DOD's planned investment in major weapon systems, reducing the ability of budgets to accommodate typical margins of error in terms of cost increases and schedule delays. As entitlement programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid consume a growing percentage of available resources, discretionary programs—including defense—face competition for the increasingly scarce remaining funds. Sustaining real top line budget increases in any discretionary program will be difficult in this constrained resource environment.

DOD budget projections conform to this tightening framework by offsetting growth in procurement spending with reductions in RDT&E, personnel, and other accounts. The minimal real increases projected in defense spending through fiscal year 2011 depend on these offsets. However, as table 2 shows, these projections do not reflect recent experience, nor do they take into account higher than anticipated cost growth and schedule delays, which can compound the fiscal impact and affordability of DOD's planned investment.

Table 2: Average Annual Real Growth in Defense Spending Accounts

Account	2000-2006 (actual)	2007-2011 (projected)
Procurement	5.61%	6.46%
RDT&E	8.42%	-2.95%
Military personnel	3.67%	-0.68%
Operation and Maintenance	5.55%	1.00%
Other	5.18%	-3.85%
Total	**5.45%**	**0.90%**

Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

Since 2004, total costs for a common set[4] of 64 major weapon systems under development have grown in real terms by 4.9 percent per year—costing $165 billion (constant 2007 dollars) more in 2007 than planned for in 2004. Over this same period, the funding needed to complete these programs has increased despite the significant investment that has already been made. Furthermore, as congressional leaders advise DOD to incorporate the costs of the war into the annual budget rather than into supplemental appropriations, trade-offs will likely be required among the resource demands of repairing or replacing those weapon systems damaged in Iraq and Afghanistan and future investments to modernize and transform the armed forces. If DOD cannot deliver its new weapon programs within estimated costs, difficult choices may have to be made regarding which investments to pursue and which to discontinue.

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[4] This common set refers to all programs that were reported as major defense acquisition programs in both the 2004 and 2007 assessment periods. This includes several programs whose knowledge attainment is not assessed in this report. The 64 programs that make up this common set are AEHF, AESA, AIM-9X, AMRAAM, ASDS, ATIRCM/CMWS, BFVS A3 Upgrade, C-130 AMP, C-130J, C-17, C-5 RERP, CEC, CH-47F, CVN-21, CVN-77, DDG 1000, DDG 51, E-2 AHE, E-2C REP, EELV, EFV, Excalibur, F-22A Raptor, F/A-18E/F, FBCB2, FCS, FMTV, GBS, Global Hawk, GOSHAWK, GPS II MSO Navstar, GPS II MUE Navstar, HIMARS, JASSM, Javelin, JDAM, JPATS, JSF, JSOW Baseline, JSOW, JTRS, Land Warrior, Longbow Apache Airframe Mods, LPD 17, MH-60R, MIDS-LVT, MLRS, MM III GRP, MM III PRP, NAS, NPOESS, Patriot PAC-3 Missile Segment, SBIRS High, SSGN, SSN 774, Stryker, T-AKE, Tomahawk, Trident II, UH-60M, USMC H-1 Upgrade, V-22, WGS, and WIN-T.

DOD Weapon Programs Consistently Experience a Reduced Return on Investment

While DOD is pursuing plans to transform military operations and committing more investment dollars to realize these new weapon systems, it regularly realizes a reduced return on their investment. DOD programs typically take longer to develop and cost more to buy than planned, placing additional demands on available funding. As shown in table 3, total RDT&E costs for a common set[5] of 27 weapon programs that we were able to assess since development began increased by almost $35 billion, or 33.5 percent, over the original business case (first full estimate). The same programs have also experienced an increase in the time needed to develop capabilities with a weighted average schedule increase of over 23 percent.[6]

Table 3: Cost and Cycle Time Growth for 27 Weapon Systems (billions of constant 2007 dollars)

	First full estimate	Latest estimate	Percent change
Total cost	$506.4	$603.1	19.1%
RDT&E cost	$104.7	$139.7	33.5%
Weighted average acquisition cycle time[a] (months)	137.9	170.2	23.5%

Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

---

[5] This common set refers to 27 programs included in this report that we were able to assess since development began. The 27 program are AEHF, MUOS, NPOESS, WGS, Patriot/MEADS, ARH, Excalibur, FCS, Warrior UAS, EA-18G, EFSS, V-22, AESA, E-2D AHE, JTRS HMS, JTRS GMR, Land Warrior, WIN-T, ERM, CVN-21, C-5 AMP, C-5 RERP, F-22A Modernization, Global Hawk, JSF, Reaper, and P-8A MMA. We limited analysis to these 27 programs because all data including cost, schedule, and quantities were available for comparison between program estimates.

[6] A weighted average gives more expensive programs a greater value.

[a]This is a weighted estimate of average acquisition cycle time for the 27 programs based on total program costs at the first full and latest estimates. The simple average for these two estimates was 98.9 months for the first full estimate and 124.6 months for the latest estimate resulting in a 26.1 percent change.

The consequence of cost and cycle time growth is often manifested in a reduction of the buying power of the defense dollar. As costs rise and key schedule milestones are delayed, programs are sometimes forced to make trade-offs in quantities, resulting in a reduction in buying power. Quantities for 12 of the common set programs have been reduced since their first estimate.[7] Additionally, the weighted average program acquisition unit cost for 26 of the 27 programs increased by roughly 39 percent, meaning that each unit cost significantly more to buy than originally planned.[8] Table 4 illustrates 6 programs with a significant reduction of buying power. Some of these programs experienced higher costs for the same initial quantity.

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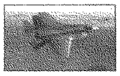
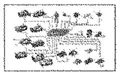
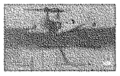
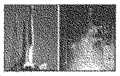
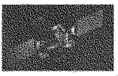
[7] The programs are AEHF, NPOESS, Excalibur, EA-18G, V-22, JTRS GMR, C-5 AMP, C-5 RERP, F-22A Modernization, Global Hawk, JSF, and P-8A MMA.

[8] This estimate is a weighted average based on total program cost and does not include the Excalibur program because of its extreme unit cost growth. The simple average program unit cost increase for the same 26 programs is 34 percent. The weighted average, including the Excalibur, is 90 percent.

Table 4: Examples of Reduced Buying Power (constant 2007 dollars)

Program		Initial estimate	Initial quantity	Latest estimate	Latest quantity	Percentage of unit cost increase
Joint Strike Fighter		$196. 5 billion	2,866 aircraft	$223.3 billion	2,458 aircraft	32.8
Future Combat Systems		$85.5 billion	15 systems	$131.7 billion	15 systems	54.1
V-22 Joint Services Advanced Vertical Lift Aircraft		$36.9 billion	913 aircraft	$50.0 billion	458 aircraft	170.2
Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle		$16.0 billion	181 vehicles	$28.6 billion	138 vehicles	134.7
Space Based Infrared System High		$4.2 billion	5 satellites	$10.4 billion	3 satellites	311.6
Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle		$8.4 billion	1,025 vehicles	$11.3 billion	1,025 vehicles	33.7

Source: GAO analysis of DOD data. Images sourced in their respective order: JSF Program Office; Program Manager, Future Combat Systems (BCT); V-22 Joint Program Office; (Left) © 2005 ILS/Lockheed Martin, (right) © 2003 The Boeing Company; Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company; General Dynamics Land Systems.

A Knowledge-Based Approach Can Lead to Better Acquisition Outcomes

Over the last several years, we have undertaken a body of work that examines weapon acquisition issues from a perspective centered on best practices in system development. We have found that leading commercial firms pursue an approach that is based in knowledge, where high levels of product knowledge are demonstrated at critical points in development. Programs take steps to gather knowledge that demonstrates that their technologies are mature, their designs are stable, and their production processes are in control. This knowledge helps programs identify risks early and address them before they become problems. The result of a knowledge-based approach is a product delivered on time, within budget, and with the promised capabilities. Based on our best practice work, we have identified three key knowledge points—junctures where programs need to display critical levels of knowledge to proceed. These knowledge points and associated indicators are defined as follows:

- **Knowledge point 1:** Resources and needs match. This point occurs when a sound business case is made for the product—that is, a match is made between the customer's requirements and the product developer's available resources in terms of knowledge, time, money, and capacity. Achieving a high level of technology maturity at the start of system development is an important indicator of whether this match has been made. This means that the technologies needed to meet essential product requirements have been demonstrated to work in their intended environment.

- **Knowledge point 2:** Product design is stable. This point occurs when a program determines that a product's design is stable—that is, it will meet customer requirements, as well as cost, schedule, and reliability targets. A best practice is to achieve design stability at the system-level critical design review, usually held midway through development. Completion of at least 90 percent of engineering drawings at the system design review provides tangible evidence that the design is stable.

- **Knowledge point 3:** Production processes are mature and the design is reliable. This point is achieved when it has been demonstrated that the company can manufacture the product within cost, schedule, and quality targets. A best practice is to ensure that all key manufacturing processes are in statistical control—that is, they are repeatable, sustainable, and capable of consistently producing parts within the product's quality tolerances and standards—at the start of production. Demonstration of a prototype that meets reliability and performance requirements prior to the production decision, can minimize production and post-production costs.

The attainment of each successive knowledge point builds upon the preceding one. If a program is falling short in one element, like technological maturity, it is harder to achieve design stability and almost impossible to achieve production maturity. In particular, separating technology development from product development can help reduce costs and deliver a product on time and within budget.

Most Programs Proceed with Low Levels of Knowledge at Critical Junctures

To get the most out of its weapon system investments, DOD revised its acquisition policy in May 2003 to incorporate a knowledge-based, evolutionary framework. However, DOD's policy does not incorporate adequate controls to ensure the effective implementation of a knowledge-based acquisition process. As we have reported in the past, most of the programs we reviewed this year proceeded with lower levels of knowledge at critical junctures and attained key elements of product knowledge later in development than specified in DOD policy. The cost and schedule consequences of delayed knowledge attainment are significant.

Programs That Enter System Development with Immature Technologies Cost More and Take Longer

Our 2007 assessment continues to show that very few programs start with mature technologies (see fig. 3). This initial knowledge deficit cascades through design and production, so that at each key juncture, decision makers have to rely on assumptions in lieu of knowledge. Only 16 percent of programs in our assessment demonstrated all of their critical technologies as mature at the start of development, meaning that the vast majority of programs failed to achieve knowledge point 1 when they should have. By design review, when programs should have attained knowledge point 2 by demonstrating a stable design, only 44 percent had attained knowledge point 1. In the past 2 years alone, several programs have passed through their development start or design review with immature technologies.[9] Without mature technologies, it is difficult to know whether the product being designed and produced will deliver the desired capabilities or, alternatively, if the design allows enough space for technology integration. Yet, 33 percent of the programs we assessed had still not attained knowledge point 1 by the time of their decision to start production.

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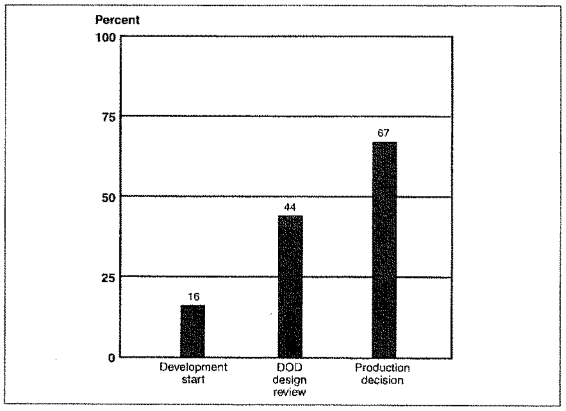
[9] Since April 2005, CH-53K, ARH, JLENS, Warrior UAS, MKV, SSN 774 Technology Insertion, and Longbow Apache Block III programs have all entered development with immature technologies. Likewise, EA-18G, JSF, DDG 1000, E2D-AHE, Land Warrior, and Warrior UAS have all held design reviews since April 2005. All six programs passed through their design reviews with immature technologies.

Figure 3: Percentage of Programs That Achieved Technology Maturity at Key Junctures

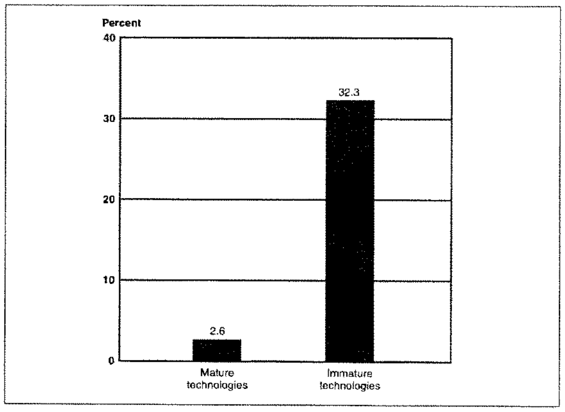


Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

Over the next 5 years, many of the programs in our assessment plan to hold a design review or make a production decision without demonstrating the level of technology maturity that should have been seen before the start of development. Twenty-three of the programs we assessed plan to hold a design review in the next 5 years. Six of those 23 did not provide a projection of their expected technology maturity by that point. Of the remaining 17 programs, only 6 reported that they expect to have achieved technology maturity by the time of their design review. Similarly, 31 of the programs in our assessment plan to make a production decision in the next 5 years, but 12 programs did not provide a projection of the technology maturity at that point and 5 of the remaining 19 programs still expect to have immature technologies at that time—not having achieved any of the knowledge points (technology maturity, design stability, or production maturity) at production start.

Consequences accrue to programs that are still working to mature technologies well into system development, when they should be focusing on maturing system design and preparing for production. Programs that start with mature technologies experience less cost growth than those that start with immature technologies. Figure 4 shows that programs that start with mature technologies saw their research, development, test and evaluation cost estimates increase by 2.6 percent over the first full estimate.

Figure 4: Average Program RDT&E Cost Growth from First Full Estimate



Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

In comparison, RDT&E costs for programs that began development with immature technologies increased by 32.3 percent over the first full estimate. Programs that started development with mature technologies also manage to stay on schedule, averaging less than a 1-month delay over their initial timetable. Alternatively, programs that began development with immature technologies have experienced average delays of more than 20 months over their original schedules. Furthermore, programs that enter development with all of their technologies mature tend to maintain their buying power, achieving their promised return on investment. Program acquisition unit costs increased by less than 1 percent for programs that reached knowledge point 1 by development start, whereas the programs that started development with immature technologies experienced an average program acquisition unit cost increase of 30 percent over the first full estimate.[10]

DOD's policy states that technologies should be demonstrated in at least a relevant environment before a program enters system development; whereas GAO utilizes the best practice standard that calls for technology to be assessed one step higher—demonstration in a realistic environment. If we applied DOD's lower standard, 32 percent of programs entered development with all of their technologies mature compared with 16 percent using the best practice standard. Using either standard, most programs still do not begin development with mature technology. There is a cost consequence of entering development with technologies at DOD's lower standard. Programs that meet DOD's technology maturity standard experience an average RDT&E cost growth of approximately 8.4 percent, whereas programs that enter development with all technologies at the higher standard specified by best practices saw their RDT&E cost estimates grow by 2.6 percent.

Programs Continue Past Design Reviews without Demonstrating a Stable Design

The majority of programs in our assessment that have held a design review did so without first achieving a stable design. As illustrated in figure 5, only 27 percent of programs in our assessment demonstrated that they had attained a stable design at the time of design review. Thirty-three percent of programs had still not achieved design stability by the time they decided to start production. Twenty-three programs in our assessment are currently scheduled to hold their critical design reviews by the year 2012. Only 5 of these programs expect to have achieved design stability by the time of their critical design reviews.

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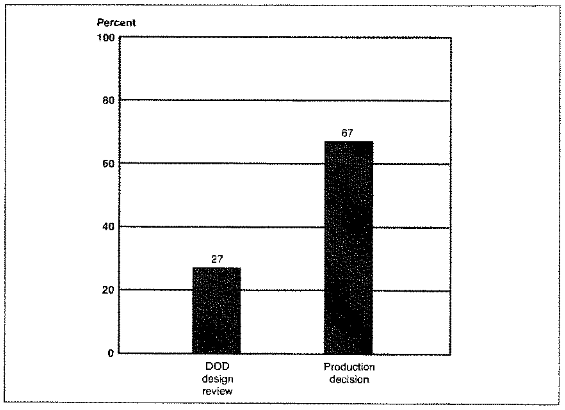
[10] These percentages are program cost weighted averages. The simple average increase for RDT&E costs is 7 percent for the programs that started development with mature technologies and 56 percent for the programs that started development with immature technologies. The simple average increase for program acquisition unit costs is 21 percent for programs that started development with mature technologies and 31 percent for the programs that started development with immature technologies.

Figure 5: Percentage of Programs That Achieved Design Stability at Key Junctures



Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

Most Programs Do Not Collect Data to Measure Production Maturity

Only 2 of the 20 programs we assessed that are now in production reported using statistical process control data to measure the maturity of the production process, which is the data needed to demonstrate knowledge point 3.[11] Neither of these programs had reached production maturity—having all of the production processes under statistical control—by knowledge point 3.

In addition to ensuring that the program meets all knowledge points prior to starting production, prototypes should be constructed and tested to make sure that the weapons being produced meet performance and reliability requirements. For example, despite having achieved technology maturity and design stability, the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle discovered reliability failures during preproduction testing. As a result, the program has delayed production and is being restructured to incorporate improvements in the vehicle design. Thirty-two of the programs we assessed provided us information on when they had or planned to have first tested a fully configured, integrated production representative article (i.e., prototype) in its intended environment. Of those programs, 47 percent reported they have already conducted or planned to conduct a developmental test of a production representative article (i.e., prototype) before they make their initial production decision. GAO's work has shown that production and postproduction costs are minimized when a prototype is demonstrated to meet reliability and performance requirements prior to the production decision.

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[11] The two programs are ATIRCM/CMWS and Global Hawk.

Effective Management Capacity and Control Are Essential to Successfully Executing a Knowledge-Based Approach

Effective program management and control are essential to facilitating a knowledge-based acquisition approach. The capacity to manage requirements, control funding, and oversee the contracted development of critical technologies, product designs, and production processes better ensures that programs stay within budget, keep on schedule, and deliver the capabilities originally promised. However, our past work has shown that DOD does not have an environment that facilitates effective program management. At the same time, DOD is increasingly relying on contractors to perform key management functions. In addition, inadequate knowledge development has resulted in the extended use of cost reimbursement contracts in some cases. Under these contracts, the government bears most of the cost risk.

DOD Does Not Provide Program Managers an Environment That Facilitates a Knowledge-Based Acquisition Approach

Our past work has shown that DOD does not have an environment that facilitates effective program management and programs have little incentive to pursue knowledge-based acquisition paths.[12] In particular, our work has shown that program managers are not empowered to execute weapons acquisition programs nor are they set up to be accountable for results. Program managers cannot veto new requirements, control funding, or control staff. In addition, DOD has not established effective controls that require decision makers to measure progress against specific criteria and ensure that managers capture key knowledge before moving to the next acquisition phase. Without effective controls that require program officials to satisfy specific criteria, it is difficult to hold decision makers or program managers accountable to cost and schedule targets. Moreover, the incentive structure of program managers—based primarily on maintaining program funding—contributes to the consistent underestimation of costs, optimistic schedules, and the suppression of bad news that could jeopardize funding. Furthermore, rather than lengthy assignment periods between key milestones as suggested by best practices, many of the programs we reviewed had multiple program managers within the same milestone. This promotes shortsightedness and reduces accountability for poor outcomes. Consequently, programs have little incentive to pursue knowledge-based acquisition paths as program funding is not tied to successfully reaching knowledge points before a program can proceed.

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[12] GAO, *Best Practices: Better Support of Weapon System Program Managers Needed to Improve Outcomes*, GAO-06-110 (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 30, 2005).

Contractors Increasingly Perform Key Program Management Functions

DOD is relying on contractors in new ways to manage and deliver weapon systems. While DOD has downsized its acquisition workforce by almost half in the last decade, DOD has increased its contract obligations for professional, administrative, and management support from $10.8 billion in 1996 to $28.3 billion in 2005 (both in constant 2005 dollars). Based on our work looking at various major weapon systems, we have observed that DOD has given contractors increased program management responsibilities to develop requirements, design products, and select major system and subsystem contractors. In part, this increased reliance has occurred because DOD is experiencing a critical shortage of certain acquisition professionals with technical skills related to systems engineering, program management, and cost estimation. The increased dependence on contractors raises questions about the capacity of DOD to manage new weapon system programs, an undertaking made more difficult when technology, design, and production knowledge are lacking.

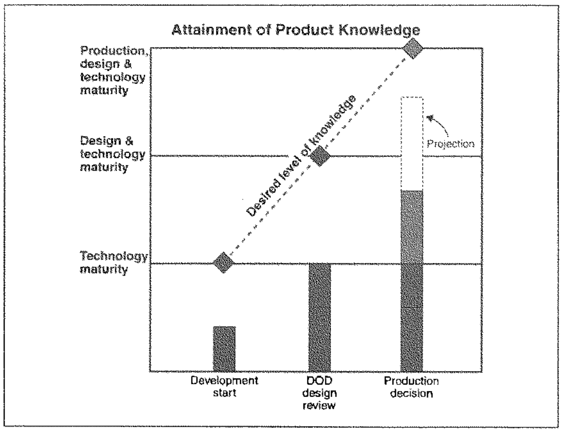
Inadequate Knowledge Development Has Resulted in the Extended Use of Cost Reimbursement Contracts in Some Cases

The extended use of cost reimbursement contracts may be a further consequence of inadequate knowledge attainment. Under a cost reimbursement contract, the government bears most of the cost risk—the risk of paying more than it expected. DOD typically uses cost reimbursement contracts for development and can use fixed price contracts for production and deployment. If technologies are mature, designs are stable, and production processes are in place, then production costs are more likely to be known. In these cases the program can more easily award a fixed price contract. However, we found several examples of programs extending the use of cost reimbursement contracts into production and deployment instead of using fixed price contracts, reflecting uncertainties in program development. While the extended use of cost reimbursement contracts may be appropriate under these circumstances, it is indicative of programs proceeding through the acquisition process with inadequate knowledge.

How to Read the Knowledge Graphic for Each Program Assessed

We assess each program in two pages and depict the extent of knowledge in a stacked bar graph and provide a narrative summary at the bottom of the first page. As illustrated in figure 6, the knowledge graph is based on the three knowledge points and the key indicators for the attainment of knowledge: technology maturity (depicted in orange), design stability (depicted in green), and production maturity (depicted in blue). A "best practice" line is drawn based on the ideal attainment of the three types of knowledge at the three knowledge points. The closer a program's attained knowledge is to the best practice line, the more likely the weapon will be delivered within estimated cost and schedule. A knowledge deficit at the start of development—indicated by a gap between the technology knowledge attained and the best practice line—means the program proceeded with immature technologies and faces a greater likelihood of cost and schedule increases as technology risks are discovered and resolved.

Figure 6: Depiction of a Notional Weapon System's Knowledge as Compared with Best Practices



Source: GAO.

An interpretation of this notional example would be that the system development began with key technologies immature, thereby missing knowledge point 1. Knowledge point 2 was not attained at the design review, as some technologies were still not mature and only a small percentage of engineering drawings had been released. Projections for the production decision show that the program is expected to achieve greater levels of maturity but will still fall short. It is likely that this program would have had significant cost and schedule increases.

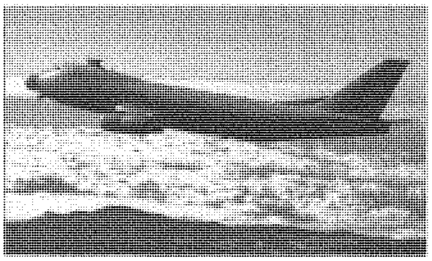
We conducted our review from June 2006 through March 2007 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Appendix II contains detailed information on our methodology.

Assessments of Individual Programs

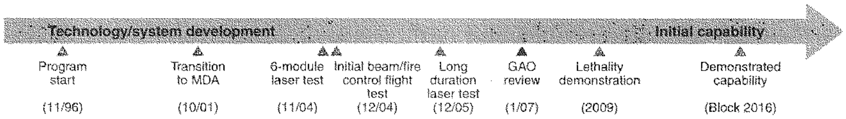
Our assessments of the 62 weapon systems follow.

Airborne Laser (ABL)

MDA's ABL element is being developed in capability-based blocks to destroy enemy missiles during the boost phase of flight. Carried aboard a modified Boeing 747 aircraft, ABL employs a beam control/fire control subsystem to focus the beam on a target, a high-energy chemical laser to rupture the fuel tanks of enemy missiles, and a battle management subsystem to plan and execute engagements. We assessed the Block 2004 design, which is being further developed in Block 2006, and is expected to lead to a lethality demonstration in 2009.



Source: Airborne Laser Program Office.


Technology/system development
Initial capability
Program start (11/96)
Transition to MDA (10/01)
6-module laser test (11/04)
Initial beam/fire control flight test (12/04)
Long duration laser test (12/05)
GAO review (1/07)
Lethality demonstration (2009)
Demonstrated capability (Block 2016)

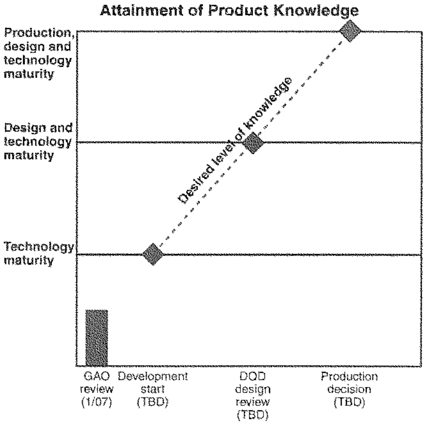
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

Program officials expected ABL to provide an initial capability during Block 2006, but this event was delayed and none of ABL's seven critical technologies are fully mature. During Block 2006, the program continues work on a prototype expected to provide the basic design for a future operational capability. Program officials expected to demonstrate the prototype's critical technologies during a flight test in late 2008, but recent testing problems delayed the test until fiscal year 2009. MDA released 100 percent of the engineering drawings for the prototype's design, but additional drawings may be needed if problems encountered during future testing force design changes. The program's prime contractor replanned future contract work in August 2004. However, the program continues to overrun its fiscal year cost and schedule budgets.



ABL Program

Technology Maturity

The program office assessed all seven of its critical technologies—the six-module laser, missile tracking, atmospheric compensation, transmissive optics, optical coatings, jitter control, and managing the high-power beam—as nearly mature. According to program officials, all of these technologies have been demonstrated in a relevant environment and are needed to provide the system with an initial operational capability.

Although the program office assessed jitter control as nearly mature, the technology will pose a high risk until it is demonstrated in flight tests. Jitter—a phenomenon pertaining to the technology of controlling and stabilizing the high-energy laser beam so that vibration unique to the aircraft does not degrade the laser's aimpoint—is critical to the operation of the laser. The ABL's laser beam must be stable enough to impart sufficient energy on a fixed spot of the target to rupture its fuel tank. Program officials told us that they will continue to refine jitter mitigation efforts and will learn more about jitter control in future tests.

Since our last assessment, the program office has reevaluated the maturity level for one of its critical technologies—managing the high-power beam. The technology was reported as fully mature, but has since been assessed as nearly mature as it has not yet been demonstrated in a realistic environment. The program plans to demonstrate all technologies in a realistic environment during a flight test of the system prototype, referred to as a lethal demonstration, in which ABL will attempt to shoot down a short-range ballistic missile. Challenges with integrating the laser and beam control/fire control subcomponents have delayed this test into 2008, and recent technical challenges associated with developing and testing the beam control/fire control software have caused further delays in the lethal demonstration.

Design Stability

We could not assess ABL's design stability because the element's initial capability will not be fully developed until the second aircraft is well under way. While the program has released 100 percent of its engineering drawings for the prototype, it is unclear whether the design of the prototype aircraft can be relied upon as a good indicator of design stability for the second aircraft. More drawings may be needed if the design is enhanced or if problems encountered during flight testing force design changes.

Production Maturity

The program is producing a limited quantity of hardware for the system's prototype. However, we did not assess the production maturity of ABL because MDA has not made a production decision.

Other Program Issues

In 2004, the ABL program restructured its prime contract to focus on near-term milestones and to provide a more realistic budget and schedule for the remaining work. The program further refined its work plan in 2005. However, recent technical challenges associated with the program's beam control/fire control ground test series are causing the contractor to experience further cost growth and schedule slip. As of June 2006, the program was overrunning its fiscal year 2006 budget by approximately $49 million and was unable to complete approximately $23 million of planned work.

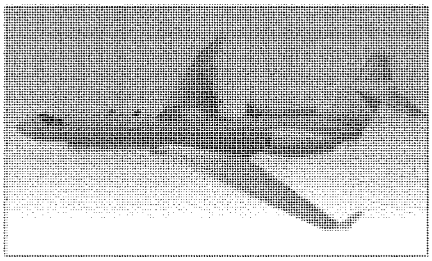
Additionally, the program has experienced a number of quality-related issues that may have impacted laser performance. During fiscal year 2006, several laser subcomponents failed or were found to be deficient. Program officials believe that a number of the deficiencies and failures were attributable to poor quality control and may have contributed to the laser achieving 83 percent of its design power, rather than the 100 percent originally planned. According to officials, the program will test the laser power again once all deficiencies are resolved.

Agency Comments

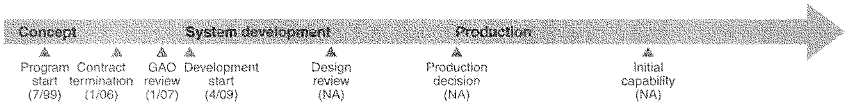
MDA provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Aerial Common Sensor (ACS)

The Army's ACS is an airborne reconnaissance, intelligence, surveillance, and target acquisition system and is being designed to provide timely intelligence data on threat forces to the land component commander. The ACS will replace the Guardrail Common Sensor and the Airborne Reconnaissance Low airborne systems. ACS will co-exist with current systems until it is phased in and current systems retire.



Source: Graphic artist rendering of generic Airborne ISR platform. No photo image available.



Program Essentials
Prime contractor: TBD
Program office: Fort Monmouth, N.J.
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

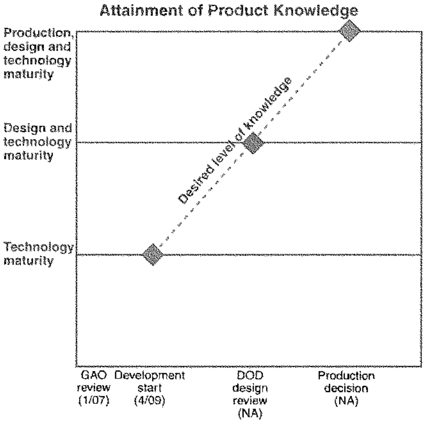
Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	TBD	TBD

[illegible]

Due to a significant increase in ACS weight, the Army terminated the development contract. By the time the contract was terminated, three technologies had reached maturity and one more was nearing maturity. The Army expected to demonstrate the maturity of all but one critical technology by the original design review in December 2006. The program office estimated that 50 percent of drawings would have been releasable at that time. The Army is currently reassessing requirements for the program and plans to restart development in the third quarter of fiscal year 2009. The new date for design review has not been determined. Some requirements may be eliminated, moved to a future spiral, or assigned to another system. ACS system technologies maturity, design, cost, and schedule will likely be affected.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



ACS Program

Technology Maturity

Only one of ACS's six critical technologies was mature when the program initially started development in July 2004 and two more were nearing maturity. When the Army terminated the development contract, one additional technology was nearing maturity. The maturity of one of the remaining technologies was tied to the development of the airborne version of the Joint Tactical Radio System, which would not have been available until after ACS was fielded. The Army expected that all of the critical technologies except the one tied to the radios would be fully mature by December 2006. It is not currently clear which requirements might be eliminated or the resulting impact to the technology maturity. However, the Army plans to seek approval for development start only after all its critical technologies have reached maturity.

Design Stability

The program office estimated that 50 percent of the drawings expected for ACS would have been releasable by the original design review, which was scheduled for December 2006. However, in December 2004, 5 months after the program began development, the contractor informed the Army that the weight of the prime mission equipment had exceeded the structural limits of the aircraft. In September 2005, the Army ordered the contractor to stop all work under the existing contract and in January 2006 terminated the contract for system development. As a result, the new date for design review has not been determined, but it is unlikely that any of the original drawings will be relevant at the time of program restart due to technology obsolescence and program redefinition.

Other Program Issues

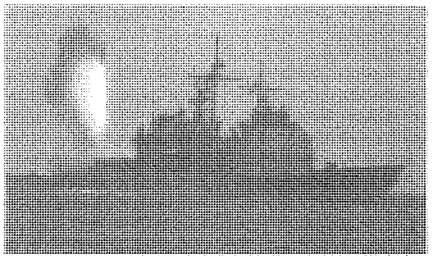
In December 2005, just prior to contract termination, the Deputy Secretary of Defense directed the Army and Navy, in coordination with the Air Force, Joint Staff, and others to conduct a study of joint multi-intelligence airborne ISR needs. The report findings, which were due to the Deputy Secretary of Defense by the end of July 2006, are still pending. Four options are being considered. One option would be to restart system development with most or all of the previous requirements intact. The second option would be to field a system that is more capable than those currently operating while deferring some requirements for future spirals. This option would probably still require a business jet or larger platform to permit growth. The third option would be to field two systems with some requirements on a manned platform and some on an unmanned platform. The fourth option would be to field an unmanned system. The Army expects to make a decision in time for it to be reflected in the fiscal year 2008 president's budget.

Agency Comments

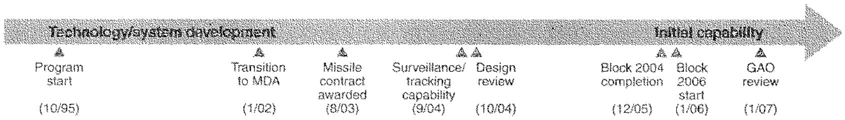
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Army provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (Aegis BMD)

MDA's Aegis BMD element is a sea-based missile defense system being developed in incremental, capability-based blocks to protect deployed U.S. forces, allies, and friends from short-to-medium-range ballistic missile attacks. Key components include the shipboard SPY-1 radar, hit-to-kill missiles, and command and control systems. It will also be used as a forward-deployed sensor for surveillance and tracking of intercontinental ballistic missiles. We assessed the missile to be delivered in Block 2006, the Standard Missile 3 (SM-3) Block 1A.



Source: Aegis BMD Program Office.


Technology/system development
Initial capability
Program start (10/95)
Transition to MDA (1/02)
Missile contract awarded (8/03)
Surveillance/ tracking capability (9/04)
Design review (10/04)
Block 2004 completion (12/05)
Block 2006 start (1/06)
GAO review (1/07)

Program Essentials

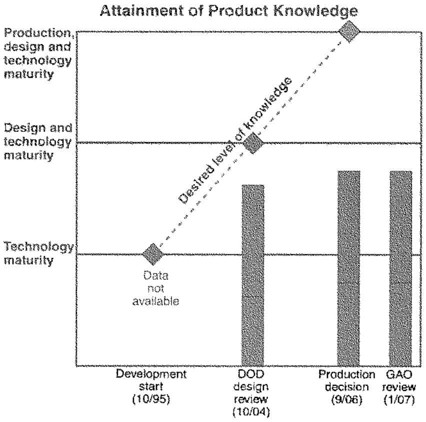
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	NA	NA	NA
Total quantities	NA	NA	NA
Acquisition cycle time (months)	NA	NA	NA

[illegible]

According to program officials, the Block 1A missile being fielded during 2006-2007 has mature technologies and a stable design. However, we believe that two critical technologies are less mature because full functionality of these two capabilities of the new missile has not been demonstrated in a realistic environment. If events occur that require the new capability, program officials believe the upgrades will perform as expected. Even without them, officials noted that the missile provides a credible defense against the Block 2004 threat set and some of the Block 2006 threat set. All drawings have been released to manufacturing. The program is not collecting statistical data on its production process of the Block 1A missile but is using other means to gauge production readiness.



Aegis BMD Program

Technology Maturity

Program officials believe that all three technologies critical to the SM-3 Block 1A missile are mature. However, we believe that two of these critical technologies are less mature. The warhead's seeker has been fully demonstrated in flight tests and is mature. We believe two other technologies, which were upgraded to create the SM-3 Block 1A, are less mature: the Solid Divert and Attitude Control System (SDACS) and the Third Stage Rocket Motor. While some modes of these technologies have been demonstrated in flight tests, the "pulse mode" of the SDACS, which provides endgame divert for the kinetic warhead, and the "zero pulse mode" of the Third Stage Rocket Motor, which increases the missile's capability against shorter-range threats, have not been successfully flight-tested. The SDACS operation in pulse mode failed during a June 2003 flight test. According to program officials, the test failure was a result of multiple issues with the original design. The program has implemented changes to address these problems. While recent ground tests have demonstrated performance of the new configuration, the changes have not yet been flight tested. A flight test in December 2006 that would have partially demonstrated the pulse SDACS was not completed because the missile failed to launch. A flight test that will fully test the new SDACS design is not planned until 2008.

The Third Stage Rocket Motor is capable of three modes of operation, two of which have been added in Block 2006. While both new modes failed initial ground testing, one was later successfully flight tested in June 2006 after design changes. The second, zero pulse mode, has also undergone design changes. While program officials believe they have a working design and that the missile can use this mode if needed, it has not yet been flight-tested. The first flight-test that could demonstrate this capability is not scheduled until fiscal year 2009.

Design Stability

Program officials reported that the design for the SM-3 Block 1A missiles being produced during Block 2006 is stable with 100 percent of its drawings released to manufacturing. Although two upgrades to the SM-3 Block 1A missile have not been fully flight-tested, the program does not anticipate any additional design changes related to these upgrades.

Production Maturity

We did not assess the production maturity of the 22 SM-3 missiles being procured for Block 2006. Program officials stated that the contractor's processes are not yet mature enough to statistically track production processes. The Aegis BMD program is using other means to assess progress in production and manufacturing, such as tracking rework hours, cost of defects per unit, and other defect and test data.

Other Program Issues

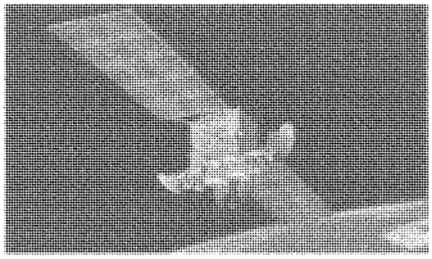
The Aegis BMD element builds upon the existing capabilities of Aegis-equipped Navy cruisers and destroyers. Planned hardware and software upgrades to these ships will enable them to carry out the ballistic missile defense mission. In particular, the program is upgrading Aegis destroyers for long-range surveillance and tracking of intercontinental ballistic missiles. The program plans to complete the upgrade of 14 destroyers by the end of the Block 2006 period. In several events, this functionality has been successfully tested, but it has never been validated in an end-to-end flight test with the GMD system, for which it is providing long-range surveillance and tracking. Since our last assessment, Aegis BMD's planned budget through fiscal year 2009 increased by $362.4 million (4.2 percent), primarily in fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

Agency Comments

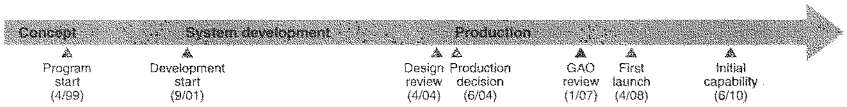
The program office provided technical comments to a draft of this assessment, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) Satellites

The Air Force's AEHF satellite system will replenish the existing Milstar system with higher capacity, survivable, jam-resistant, worldwide, secure communication capabilities for strategic and tactical warfighters. The program includes satellites and a mission control segment. Terminals used to transmit and receive communications are acquired separately by each service. AEHF is an international partnership program that includes Canada, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands. We assessed the satellite and mission control segments.



Source: Advanced EHF Program Office.



Concept
System development
Production
Program start (4/99)
Development start (9/01)
Design review (4/04)
Production decision (6/04)
GAO review (1/07)
First launch (4/08)
Initial capability (6/10)

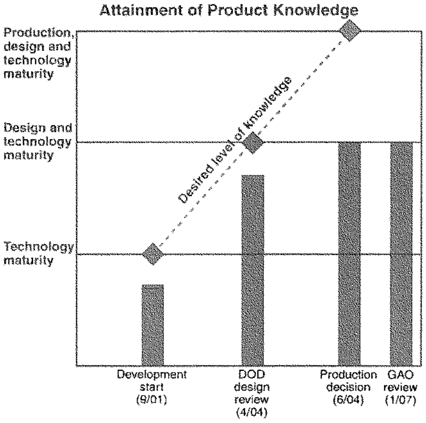
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The AEHF program's technologies are mature and the design is stable. In late 2004, the program was delayed and restructured because key cryptographic equipment would not be delivered in time and to allow the program time to replace some critical electronic components and add testing. Schedule risk remained due to the continued concurrent development of two critical path items managed and developed outside the program. According to the program office, these issues have been resolved and the first satellite is entering into final integration and testing and is on schedule for first launch. Current plans are to meet full operational capability with three AEHF satellites and the first Transformational Satellite Communications System (TSAT) satellite.



AEHF Program

Technology Maturity

According to the program office, all of the 14 critical technologies are mature, having been demonstrated in a relevant environment. The technologies are being integrated into the first satellite and for final environmental testing.

Design Stability

AEHF's design is stable. All expected design drawings have been released. The program completed its system-level critical design review in April 2004.

Production Maturity

Production maturity could not be assessed, as the program office does not collect statistical process control data.

Other Program Issues

The program was restructured in October 2004, when the National Security Agency did not deliver key cryptographic equipment to the payload contractor in time to meet the launch schedule. The restructuring delayed the program 1 year to allow time to resolve the cryptographic delivery problems and other program issues including replacement of critical electronic components and additional payload testing. Resolving these issues added about $800 million to the program. Last year, we reported that the program still faced schedule risk due to concurrent development of two critical path items developed and managed outside the program: the cryptographic components developed and produced by the National Security Agency and the Command Post Terminal managed by another Air Force program office.

The program office reported all cryptographic hardware and components for the satellites were delivered, meeting all revised delivery milestones. In addition, the replacement of critical electronic components and additional payload testing was completed.

Since our assessment of the AEHF last year, the Command Post Terminal, a critical path item, was delayed. However, the program office will now use the test terminal that was originally built to provide end-to-end testing of the system to control the satellites. Program officials stated that utilizing the test terminal, developed by Lincoln Laboratories, will have no adverse schedule or operational impact on the satellites.

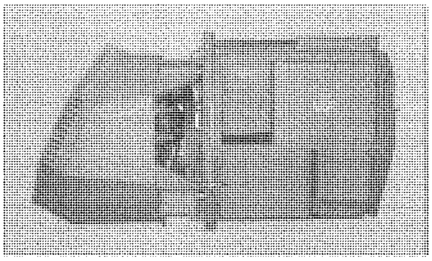
Program officials told us the mission control segment continues to meet or exceed its schedule and performance milestones. Three AEHF satellite launches are scheduled for 2008, 2009, and 2010 respectively. In the last year, the program completed most systems-level testing and started final integration and environmental testing on the first satellite. The program office stated that the program remains on schedule to meet the first launch date. The flight structure for the second satellite has been delivered for payload integration. The third satellite is on contract and includes procurement of long lead components. Full operational capability is planned with three AEHF satellites and the first TSAT.

Agency Comments

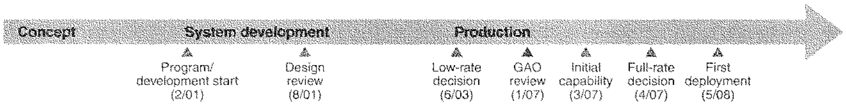
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Air Force stated that AEHF remains on track for a first launch date of April 2008 with events proceeding as expected in accordance with the December 2004 program replan. The Air Force further stated that the program is currently in fabrication and production of the first two satellites, and the third satellite will begin assembly, integration, and test in fiscal year 2009. It noted that the cryptographic chip development has remained on schedule since the January 2005 summit between the Air Force and the National Security Agency. In addition, the Air Force stated that all spacecraft flight cryptographic units were received on schedule and that chips for the ground terminals are due over the next couple of years to support terminal production schedules. Moreover, according to Air Force officials, DOD explored the option of adding a fourth AEHF satellite to mitigate the potential gap caused by schedule slips in the TSAT program, but decided to restructure the TSAT program baseline and not purchase a fourth AEHF satellite at this time.

Active Electronically Scanned Array Radar (AESA)

The Navy's AESA radar is one of the top upgrades for the F/A-18E/F aircraft. It is to be the aircraft's primary search/track and weapon control radar and is designed to correct deficiencies in the current radar. According to the Navy, the AESA radar is key to maintaining the Navy's air-to-air fighting advantage and will improve the effectiveness of the air-to-ground weapons. When completed, the radar will be inserted in new production aircraft and retrofitted into lot 26 and above aircraft.



Source: U.S. Navy.



Program Essentials

Prime contractor: [illegible]

Program office: [illegible]

Funding needed to complete:

R&D: [illegible]

Procurement: [illegible]

Total funding: [illegible]

Procurement quantity: [illegible]

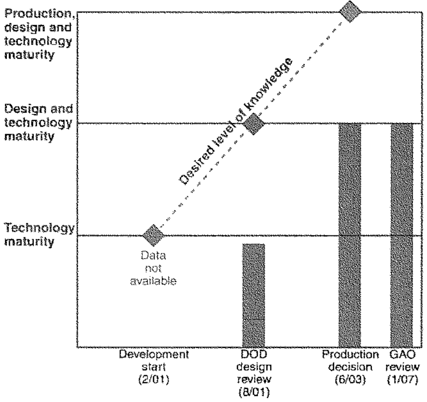
Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]

The AESA radar's critical technologies appear to be mature and the design appears stable, but radar development continues during production. According to the program office, there has been significant progress in radar maturation, performance, and stability. However, risks and problems remain. Software development continues to be a top challenge, and spurious radar emissions could require software and/or hardware changes. Development of design improvements is ongoing. The program also carries a challenging risk associated with the production rate. Although program costs appear somewhat stable, two key milestones—initial operational capability and full-rate production—have slipped by several months, and first deployment of the radar in a full squadron has been delayed by the carrier airwing schedule.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



AESA Program

Technology Maturity

A fiscal year 2004 technology readiness assessment for the radar determined that the four critical technologies were mature. To further ensure technology maturity, a final technology assessment was held in November 2005. Program officials now consider critical technologies to work in their final form and under expected conditions.

Design Stability

Although the AESA design appears to be stable, development has continued during production. That development has been slowed by software immaturity, and the software has caused inconsistent radar performance. Several advanced radar capabilities were deferred to future software configurations, but program officials said it did not affect key performance parameters. Software hangups have forced radar restarts in each of the six AESA operational test aircraft. The problem is improving, but is still above the required rate.

Other deficiencies are being pursued, such as improving target breakout, track scheduling, and fault detection. Integrating AESA software capabilities and correcting deficiencies continue under a technical delivery order contract. Spurious radiated emissions may degrade performance of other subsystems, which could result in unacceptable weapon system performance. Redesign of radar modules and/or software changes may be required to reduce emissions. Officials said development of design improvements has been completed or is almost complete, but ongoing verification tests may require additional design changes.

Operational evaluation started later than planned due to delays in maturing air-to-air software, so it was not completed until November 2006, and the report is not expected until January 2007, resulting in a 5-month delay for initial operational capability. Follow-on tests are scheduled through fiscal year 2008 to test, for example, advanced air-to-air modes and integration with aircraft electronic warfare systems. Unsatisfactory results could result in system software changes.

Development of the radar's anti-tamper capability is on schedule according to officials. Operational testing of this capability is to be completed in fiscal year 2008. While the anti-tamper capability is required to have no effect on radar performance, operational tests of anti-tamper models may identify problems requiring design changes. By then, about 116 radars are to have been produced.

Production Maturity

We could not assess production maturity because statistical process control data are not being collected. Manufacturing processes continue to be monitored and controlled at each manufacturing center and laboratory. Twenty percent of the 415 radars have been approved for production now that the fourth and final low-rate production has been approved. Most of the 415 radars will be installed in F/A-18E/Fs on the aircraft production line, but 135 radars are to be retrofitted into existing aircraft. As of November 2006, 24 radars had been delivered and installed in aircraft. Long-lead funding for full production has been approved, but due to the testing delay, full-rate production has slipped by 3 months. The program has a challenging production risk. On-time delivery of radars is risky for the fourth low-rate production lot because production must increase from 2 to 4 radars per month, retrofit radars begin in fiscal year 2008, and foreign military sales follow. Thus, on-time delivery of aircraft could be affected by missing or late radars.

Other Program Issues

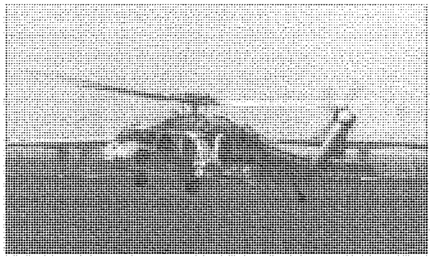
The first deployment of AESA radars in a full squadron has been delayed by 6 months due to a Navy decision on the carrier airwing schedule, not AESA problems, according to officials.

Agency Comments

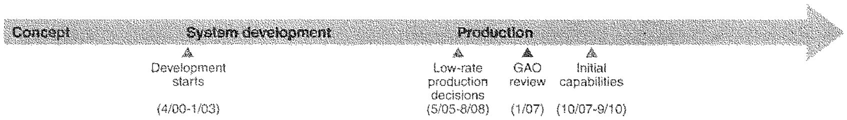
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Navy stated AESA software development continues in a spiral fashion during production as planned. Operational evaluation was completed in December 2006 and is expected to support initial operational capability in March 2007 and full-rate production in April 2007, both within thresholds. Due to schedule delays, some advanced radar capabilities were deferred, as approved. Many of the deferred items for most of the deficiencies identified during operational evaluation have been incorporated in the next aircraft software build, and will undergo operational tests prior to first system deployment in 2008. Final advanced capabilities will be incorporated in the following year.

Airborne Mine Countermeasures (AMCM)

The Navy is developing new Airborne Mine Countermeasures (AMCM) systems that will be fielded with aircraft mission kits on MH-60S Block 2 helicopters. Together, these systems will provide carrier strike groups and expeditionary strike groups with organic airborne mine countermeasures capability. To successfully field this capability, the Navy must develop, test, and integrate 5 new mine countermeasures systems with a modified MH-60S airframe. We assessed the Navy's progress in developing the mine countermeasures systems.



Source: Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City (PMA-299).



Program Essentials

Prime contractor: Arete Associates, Boeing, EDO Defense Systems, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon
Program office: Washington, D.C.
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

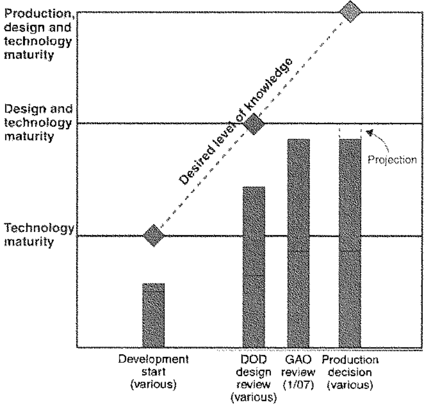
Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	NA	NA	NA
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	NA	NA	NA

[illegible]

The MH-60S Block 2 AMCM helicopter will rely upon 5 new mine countermeasures systems, the AN/AQS-20A Mine Detecting Sonar, Airborne Laser Mine Detection System, Organic Airborne and Surface Influence Sweep System, Rapid Airborne Mine Clearance System, and Airborne Mine Neutralization System. The Navy has not yet fully matured technologies for 3 of these systems, although it asserts a high degree of design stability in these programs. However, if technologies do not mature as planned, design changes for the affected systems may be required. In addition, the Navy is not collecting statistical process control data for the 2 systems in production, preventing us from assessing production maturity. The achievement of key product knowledge shown is for the Organic Airborne and Surface Influence Sweep System, Rapid Airborne Mine Clearance System, and Airborne Mine Neutralization System.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



AMCM Program

Technology Maturity

Thirty-three of the 38 critical technologies comprising the 5 MH-60S mine countermeasures systems are fully mature, and the remaining five technologies are approaching maturity. Technologies supporting the AN/AQS-20A Mine Detecting Sonar and the Organic Airborne and Surface Influence Sweep System are all fully mature. However, the Airborne Laser Mine Detection System and the Rapid Airborne Mine Clearance System each have one immature technology, while the Airborne Mine Neutralization System has three technologies that have not been fully matured.

The Airborne Laser Mine Detection System is currently in production. This system detects, classifies, and localizes floating and near surface moored mines by firing a laser into the water and using cameras to capture water reflections to create images. One technology that enables this process is the system's active pixel sensor, which the Navy has not fully matured. Although the Navy has identified a mature backup technology for the active pixel sensor that will be used in the event problems are discovered during testing, this alternative will impose schedule delays upon the program as it will require integration into the existing system design.

The Rapid Airborne Mine Clearance System is currently in development, with initial production planned for August 2008. This system will use a 30 millimeter gun and targeting sensor to neutralize near-surface and surface (floating) moored mines. One technology critical to achieving full functionality of this system is its fire control system, which the Navy is still developing. The Navy plans to test the fire control system in a relevant environment in the second quarter of fiscal year 2007.

The Airborne Mine Neutralization System is currently in development and is scheduled to enter production in June 2007. This system will provide the capability to neutralize bottom and moored mines using an airborne delivered expendable mine neutralization device. The Navy has fully matured this system's neutralizer technology, and is approaching full maturity with its launch and handling subsystem, deployment subassembly, and warhead assembly technologies.

Design Stability

All 5 of the MH-60S mine countermeasures systems have completed design readiness reviews. To date, 98 percent of design drawings have been released for these systems, and the Navy anticipates that only the Airborne Mine Neutralization System and the Airborne Laser Mine Detection System will require completion of additional drawings. While the Navy considers the design for the Rapid Airborne Mine Clearance System to be complete, if this system's fire control system technology does not mature as planned, design changes could be required.

Production Maturity

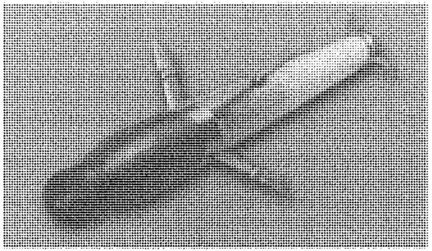
Both the AN/AQS-20A Mine Detecting Sonar and Airborne Laser Mine Detection System are currently in production. Currently, the Navy is not collecting statistical process control data for these systems—an approach it attributes to the limited number of initial production units being procured. Consequently, we could not assess production maturity for either the AN/AQS-20A Mine Detecting Sonar or the Airborne Laser Mine Detection System.

Agency Comments

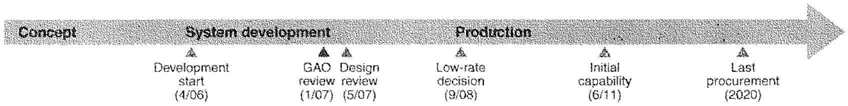
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Navy provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) II

The Army's APKWS II is a precision-guided, air-to-surface missile designed to engage soft and lightly armored targets. The system is intended to add a new laser-based seeker to the existing Hydra 70 Rocket System and is expected to provide a lower cost, accurate alternative to the Hellfire missile. Future block upgrades are planned to improve system effectiveness. We assessed the laser guidance technology used in the new seeker.



Source: APKWS II Program Office, BAE Systems.



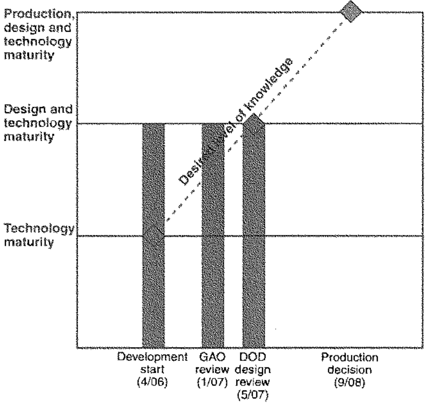
Program Essentials
Prime contractor: BAE Systems
Program office: Huntsville, Ala.
Funding needed to complete:
  R&D: [illegible]
  Procurement: [illegible]
  Total funding: [illegible]
  Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.0
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.0
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.0
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.0
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.0
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.0

The APKWS II program entered system development with its one critical technology mature and its design stable. Since our previous assessment, the Army restructured the program and, in April 2006, awarded a 2-year, $41.9 million system development and demonstration contract for the new APKWS II program. Last year, we reported that the combination of a number of problems, including the placement of the laser seeker on the fins rather than in the head of the missile, led to the Army's curtailment of the original APKWS contract in January 2005. Although the APKWS II laser guidance technology appears mature, its integration on the missile's fins still presents a risk since this design is essentially the same as the original APKWS. Due to funding uncertainty, the schedule for the design review slipped from June 2006 to May 2007 and flight tests were delayed from August 2006 to January 2007.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



APKWS II Program

Technology Maturity

Program officials consider the one APKWS critical technology, laser guidance, to be mature. However, on the original APKWS program, integration of the laser seeker and guidance proved to be more problematic than originally estimated, and this difficulty contributed to contract curtailment and program restructuring. The Army restructured the program under the same set of key performance parameters and, in April 2006, awarded the APKWS II contract to one of the original program participants using the same laser seeker and guidance technology as in the original program. According to program officials, the contractor funded its own work on the revised APKWS II during the 15-month period between the original program curtailment and contract award for the follow-on program. The contractor's effort focused on the problems that plagued the original program. Program officials stated that during the interim 15-month period, the contractor successfully addressed the original APKWS problems and also conducted three successful missile flights.

Design Stability

The number of engineering drawings increased from 115 to 160 from the original APKWS to the APKWS II program. According to program officials, the drawings now include guidance and telemetry section drawings. Program officials expect to have all the engineering drawings released by the design review in May 2007. Due to funding uncertainty, the system critical design review slipped from June 2006 to May 2007.

Production Maturity

According to program officials, key manufacturing processes have not yet been determined. However, officials stated that statistical process control will be employed and all key manufacturing processes will be placed under control during low-rate initial production.

Other Program Issues

Program officials expected to hold the APKWS II system critical design review in June 2006 and flight tests in August 2006. However, funding uncertainty has caused those schedules to slip. The Army requested that some of the procurement money originally slated for the first APKWS be reprogrammed to support the development of APKWS II. This request was followed by two additional requests from the Army to reprogram money from another source. However, Congress has not yet approved any reprogramming requests for APKWS II. Subsequently, in June 2006, the Army directed the prime contractor to take actions to manage the contract within current funding constraints and to execute the contract through November 2006 with existing funding. That has caused the schedule for the design review to slip to May 2007 and the flight test to January 2007. Due to the uncertainty of future funds, APKWS II program officials predict further schedule slippages and subsequent increased program costs related to replanning activities.

Agency Comments

In commenting on a draft of this assessment, program officials stated that having a design with the laser seeker on the wings was not an issue that led to the Army's curtailment of the original APKWS contract. Program officials further noted that this design presents no major difficulties to the ongoing integration of the APKWS laser seeker and guidance section into the Hydra-70 Rocket components. They believe the placement of the laser seeker provides significant advantages during extreme environmental operations and adjacent rocket firings. Also, program officials noted that the lack of required funding in fiscal years 2006 and 2007 resulted in moving the first flight to January 2007 and the design review to May 2007. Finally, they stated that efforts are ongoing to establish a revised, realistic baseline within current funding constraints and that they are confident the revised cost and schedule will not breach the current Acquisition Program Baseline.

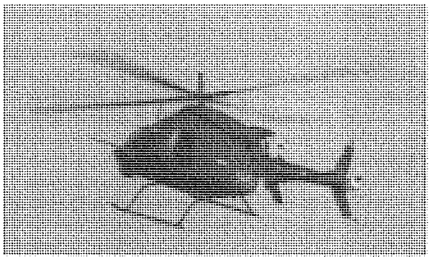
The Army also provided technical changes, which were incorporated as appropriate.

GAO Comments

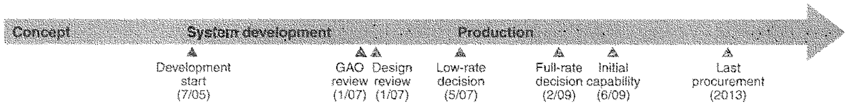
Our prior work has shown that the placement of the laser seeker on the fins rather than in the head of the missile was problematic for the original APKWS program. The integration difficulty contributed to the cost overrun and protracted schedule, which subsequently led to program curtailment and restructuring.

Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter (ARH)

The Army's ARH is expected to provide reconnaissance and security capability for air and ground maneuver teams. The ARH combines a modified off-the-shelf airframe with a nondevelopmental item mission equipment package and is replacing the OH-58D Kiowa Warrior fleet. A streamlined acquisition strategy was proposed for the ARH program, as it will be fielded to support current military operations.



Source: ARH Prototype #1 Flight Testing at Bell Helicopter, ©2006 Bell Helicopter, A Textron Company.


Concept
System development
Production
Development start (7/05)
GAO review (1/07)
Design review (1/07)
Low-rate decision (5/07)
Full-rate decision (2/09)
Initial capability (6/09)
Last procurement (2013)

Program Essentials

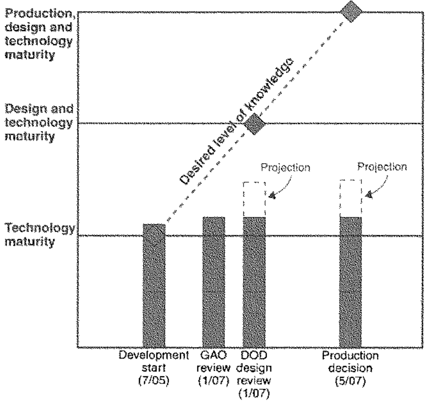
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The ARH program began system development without designating any technologies as critical. Since then, the program has identified two critical technologies—the sensor package and the engine—both of which are approaching full maturity. The ARH program is scheduled to hold its critical design review in January 2007, and it is not certain that the critical technologies will be mature by that time. The program has mandated that 85 percent of the drawings be released by the design review. About 88 percent have been released to date. The Army does not plan to collect statistical process control data in preparation for the production decision scheduled for May 2007. Rather, the Army will evaluate ARH's engineering and manufacturing readiness levels. Further, the Army's oversight of ARH may be compromised due to the decertification of the prime contractor's earned value management system.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



ARH Program

Technology Maturity

The ARH program had not designated any technologies as critical at the time of development start. However, in October 2005 (90 days after contract award), two technologies were determined to be critical. Both technologies, the sensor package and the engine, are approaching full maturity. Although the sensor is a derivative of a currently fielded and flying system, it contains some updated components. The sensor was tested earlier this year in a prototype configuration and improvements are currently being incorporated into the design. The system will be retested in late calendar year 2006. The engine has recently completed the compressor rig test, the results of which will be critical in reducing the risk of the engine and increasing the maturity level. However, the program office is unsure if these technologies will be fully mature by critical design review, scheduled for January 2007.

Design Stability

According to the program office, the ARH is a limited design effort and will take an off-the-shelf aircraft and convert it to military use by incorporating existing military and commercial equipment. The ARH program office has imposed a critical design review entrance criterion of 85 percent drawing release. The review, currently scheduled for January 2007, will not be held until this entrance criterion is satisfied. Currently, the program has released 88 percent of the drawings.

Production Maturity

We could not assess production maturity because, according to the program office, it does not plan to collect statistical process control data. However, the program office stated that production is managed through the use of engineering and manufacturing readiness levels (EMRLs).To determine production capability, the ARH program stated it will conduct a production readiness review (including an assessment of the EMRL), review facility plans and limited tooling development, conduct an operations capacity analysis, and assess lean manufacturing initiatives such as design for six sigma. In addition, the program office stated that the production status of the ARH program will be evaluated by tracking the cost of repairs and rework.

Other Program Issues

In March 2006, the lead contractor lost its earned value management certification due to a recent compliance review that found lack of progress in addressing long-standing systemic deficiencies. Without certified earned value management data, the Army will not have timely information on the contractor's ability to perform work within estimated cost and schedule. According to the program office, the contractor did not make its first milestone detailed in the Defense Contract Management Agency's corrective action plans in efforts to obtain earned value compliance. Still, the contractor plans to be compliant by the end of August 2007, 3 months after ARH low-rate initial production is scheduled to begin.

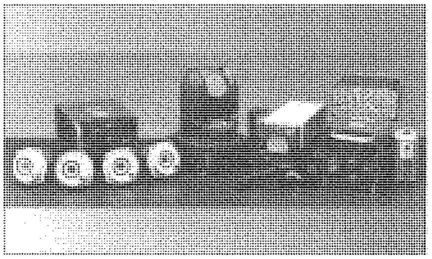
According to program officials, the Army plans to start low-rate production in May 2007 and procure two lots of 18 and 20 to conclude in May 2008. However, the Army does not plan to start full-rate production until February 2009. This schedule creates a 10-month production break between low-rate initial production and full-rate production. During the production break, the program plans to purchase development and production needs such as support equipment, pilot and maintenance trainers, and spares. Further, according to program officials, the budget reduction of $39 million in fiscal year 2007 exacerbates the break issue which could be very disruptive. The program office's proposed solution to the production break is to increase low-rate production, but this would have to be approved by the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics. Another possible solution could be to extend low-rate production to three lots, as opposed to two, which would help the program ramp up production and fill the 10-month production break.

Agency Comments

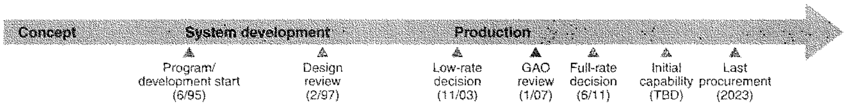
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Army provided technical comments, which were incorporated where appropriate.

Advanced Threat Infrared Countermeasure/Common Missile Warning System

The Army's and Special Operations' ATIRCM/CMWS is a component of the Suite of Integrated Infrared Countermeasures planned to defend U.S. aircraft from advanced infrared-guided missiles. The system will be employed on Army and Special Operations aircraft. ATIRCM/CMWS includes an active infrared jammer, missile warning system, and countermeasure dispenser capable of loading and employing expendables, such as flares, chaff, and smoke.



Source: BAE Systems.



Program Essentials

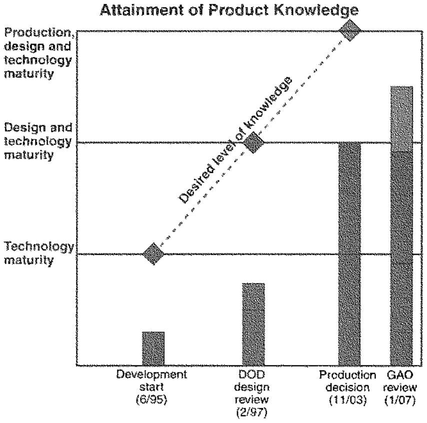
Prime contractor: BAE Systems North America
Program office: Huntsville, AL
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	Classified	Classified	Classified

The ATIRCM/CMWS program entered production in November 2003 with technologies mature and designs stable. However, one of the five critical technologies was recently downgraded due to continued technical difficulties. Currently, the program's production processes are at various levels of control. The CMWS portion of the program entered limited production in February 2002 to meet urgent deployment requirements. However, full-rate production for both components was delayed because of reliability problems. Over the past several years, the program has had to overcome cost and schedule problems brought on by shortfalls in knowledge. Key technologies were demonstrated late in development, and only a small number of design drawings were completed by design review.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



ATIRCM/CMWS Program

Technology Maturity

The program's five critical technologies were considered mature until a government/industry team recently downgraded the maturity level of the infrared jamming head due to technical issues. Additionally, the other four technologies did not mature until after the design review. Most of the early technology development effort focused on the application to rotary wing aircraft. When system development began in 1995, requirements were expanded to include Navy and Air Force fixed-wing aircraft. This change caused problems that contributed to cost increases of over 150 percent. The Navy and the Air Force subsequently dropped out of the program, but the Navy and the Army are currently pursuing future joint production planning.

Design Stability

The basic design of the system is complete with 100 percent of the drawings released to manufacturing. The design was not stable at the time of the design review, with only 22 percent of the drawings complete due to the expanded requirements. Two years after the design review, 90 percent of the drawings were released and the design was stable. This resulted in inefficient manufacturing, rework, additional testing, and a 3-year schedule delay. However, the number of drawings may be changing because the infrared jam laser and the infrared lamp will be replaced with a multi-band laser.

Production Maturity

According to program officials, the program has 26 key manufacturing processes in various phases of control. The CMWS production portion of the system has stabilized and benefited from increased production rates. Also, processes supporting both ATIRCM and CMWS will continue to be enhanced as data is gathered and lessons learned will be included in the processes.

The Army entered limited CMWS production in February 2002 to meet an urgent need. Subsequently, full rate production was delayed for both components due to reliability testing failures. The program implemented reliability fixes to six production representative subsystems for use in initial operational test and evaluation. These systems were delivered in March 2004. The full-rate production decision for the complete system was delayed until June 2011 due to ATIRCM performance issues.

Other Program Issues

The Army uses the airframe as the acquisition quantity unit of measure even though it is not buying an ATIRCM/CMWS system for each aircraft. When the program began, plans called for putting an ATIRCM/CMWS on each aircraft. Due to funding constraints, the Army reduced the number of systems to be procured and will rotate the systems to aircraft as needed. The Army is buying kits for each aircraft, which include the modification hardware, wiring harness, and cables necessary to install and interface the ATIRCM/CMWS to each platform. In May 2006, the quantity of ATIRCM/CMWS systems was increased from 1,710 to 2,752, and kits to use for aircraft integration was increased from 3,571 to 4,393. However, a new cost estimate for the additional systems has not been completed. Based on the number of systems before the May 2006 increase, the true unit procurement cost for each ATIRCM/CMWS system is more on the order of $2.95 million.

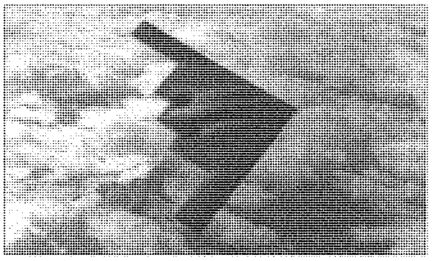
Agency Comments

In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Army stated that the ATIRCM/CMWS program continues to focus efforts on the Global War on Terrorism force protection requirements. In response to an Acting Secretary of the Army November 2003 memo to equip all Army helicopters to be deployed to the war zone with the most cost-effective defensive systems, the program office proposed accelerating the CMWS portion of ATIRCM. In July 2006, the CMWS was provided to each deployed aircraft with CMWS installation kits. These accelerated efforts provided the CMWS ahead of the planned schedule (February 2007). CMWS initial operational test and evaluation and full-rate production decision events were successfully completed during this reporting period.

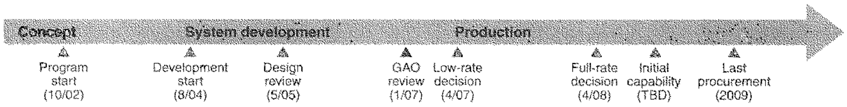
The Army also stated that the ATIRCM funding was utilized to maintain the CMWS acceleration due to delays in receipt of reprogramming funding. The rebaselined ATIRCM program efforts are now continuing, with initial operational test and evaluation planned for November 2009. This rebaselined plan was presented and approved by the Army Acquisition Executive in December 2005.

B-2 Radar Modernization Program (B-2 RMP)

The Air Force's B-2 RMP is designed to modify the current radar system to resolve potential conflicts in frequency band usage. To comply with federal requirements the frequency must be changed to a band where the DOD has been designated as the primary user. The modified radar system is being designed to support the B-2 stealth bomber and its combination of stealth, range, payload, and near-precision weapons delivery capabilities.



Source: U.S. Air Force, U.S. Edwards Air Force Base, California.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (10/02)
Development start (8/04)
Design review (5/05)
GAO review (1/07)
Low-rate decision (4/07)
Full-rate decision (4/08)
Initial capability (TBD)
Last procurement (2009)

Program Essentials

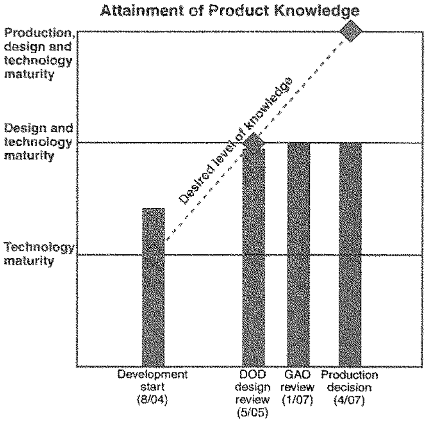
Prime contractor: Northrop Grumman
Program office: Dayton, Ohio
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	TBD	TBD

[illegible]

All four of the B-2 RMPs critical technologies are considered mature and 100 percent of the design drawings have been released. Production maturity metrics will be formulated as part of a production readiness review prior to the April 2007 start of production. However, the first of two radar antenna software sets will not complete operational testing until 2008. Further, the program will not begin tracking the radar's operational reliability until early 2007. Recent program flight-testing delays may lead to a delay in the planned start of production. Also, six operational B-2s will receive development radar units prior to the completion of flight testing. These units are necessary to obtain reliability and maintainability data and for crew training, but building them early in development may add to the risk of future design changes.



B-2 RMP Program

Technology Maturity

All four B-2 RMP critical technologies were considered mature at the design review in May 2005. While the program entered development in August 2004 with two of these four critical technologies mature and two approaching maturity, the receiver/exciter for the electronic driver cards and aspects of the antenna designed to help keep the B-2's radar signature low, all four are now considered mature.

Design Stability

The program currently has released 100 percent of its drawings and plans to maintain this 100 percent level by the planned start of production in April 2007. The program, however, does not use the release of design drawings as the sole measure of design stability but instead uses the successful completion of design events, such as subsystem design reviews, as its primary measure of design stability. The program has completed its design readiness review and at that time had released 85 percent of its design drawings.

Production Maturity

The program does not use manufacturing process control data as the sole measure of production maturity because of the small number of production units. However, the program has identified one key process related to the assembly of the radar antenna array. Instead of using manufacturing process control data, the program plans to formulate other metrics to measure progress toward production. The program plans to use these other metrics as part of a production readiness review prior to the start of production in April 2007.

The program plans to enter production in April 2007 and procure four radars at a cost of $160.7 million. However, recent flight-testing delays may lead to a reconsideration of April 2007 as the start of production and it will not be until the beginning of fiscal year 2008 when radar flight-testing has progressed to the point that the first of two planned radar antenna software sets are fully tested and certified. Furthermore, the program does not plan to track the operational reliability of the radar until January 2007. Also, an operational assessment of the radar was delayed from March 2006 to early 2007. This is an important schedule event leading up to production and its delay will impact when information will be available leading up to the start of production. Producing units before testing is able to demonstrate the design is mature and works in its intended environment increases the likelihood of future costly design changes.

The program plans to build six radar units during development to be used on B-2 aircraft to gather developmental reliability and maintainability data and provide for crew training and proficiency operations when the legacy radar frequency is no longer available. Last year, the Air Force plan was for six of these radar units to be placed on B-2 aircraft for this purpose, but because some B-2s are needed for other operations and will not be available, only two operational aircraft will initially be fitted with the new radars, with the remaining four to be fitted later in 2007. The Air Force and prime contractor have determined this will not affect training but will mean less radar reliability and maintainability data will initially be collected for analysis.

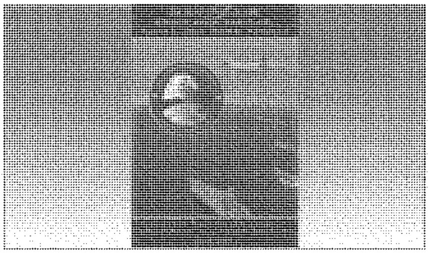
Agency Comments

The Air Force agrees that producing radar units before testing has been completed does increase the risk of future potentially costly design changes. However, they have decided the risk is low compared to the benefits gained by having operational production units in place to meet requirements.

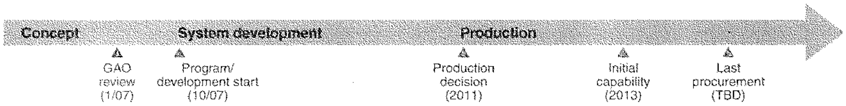
The Air Force also provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Broad Area Maritime Surveillance (BAMS)

The Navy's Broad Area Maritime Surveillance Unmanned Aircraft System (BAMS UAS) is to provide a persistent maritime intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capability. Along with the Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft and Aerial Common Sensor, BAMS UAS will be part of a broad area maritime surveillance family of systems integral to the Navy's recapitalization of its Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Force. DOD is negotiating international participation in the program.



Source: D.P. Associates, Inc./ Andrew Kirschbaum.


Concept
System development
Production
GAO review (1/07)
Program/ development start (10/07)
Production decision (2011)
Initial capability (2013)
Last procurement (TBD)

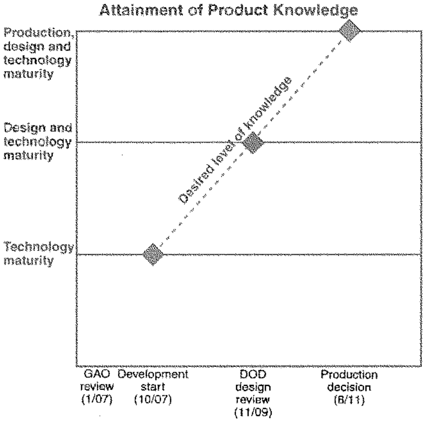
Program Essentials
Prime contractor: TBD
Program office: Patuxent River, Md.
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible] million
Procurement: [illegible] million
Total funding: [illegible] million
Procurement quantity: 4

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of NA	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	NA	[illegible]	NA
Procurement cost	NA	[illegible]	NA
Total program cost	NA	[illegible]	NA
Program unit cost	NA	TBD	NA
Total quantities	NA	TBD	NA
Acquisition cycle time (months)	NA	75	NA

The BAMS UAS program plans to begin system development in October 2007. The program previously planned to reach system development during the first quarter of fiscal year 2005. However, the Navy did not allocate funds to the program for fiscal year 2006, which delayed development start to 2007 and postponed the initial operational capability from fiscal year 2010 to 2013. Program officials have not currently identified any critical technologies, but contractor proposals will be required to identify critical technologies during the source selection period from April to September 2007. The program plans to conduct a technology readiness assessment in parallel with source selection and anticipates results by August 2007. According to program officials, each critical technology must be approaching maturity and demonstrated in a relevant environment prior to development contract award.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



BAMS Program

Technology Maturity

BAMS UAS is taking steps to evaluate technologies prior to the start of program development. The Navy awarded four contracts usiug a broad agency announcement in conjunction with its Persistent Unmanned Maritime Airborne Surveillance (PUMAS) effort to engage industry in support of developing unmanned ISR mission performance metrics and capabilities within a family of systems as well as to gain insight into the state of industry research and technology. BAMS UAS has received the study results and is in the process of using the information to develop technical baselines and assess program risks. In addition, the Navy has acquired 2 Global Hawk Maritime Demonstration (GHMD) UAS to provide a rapid technology demonstration capability. GHMD data and test results are being used to refine BAMS UAS doctrine, concept of operations, tactics, techniques, and procedures.

Program officials have not currently identified any critical technologies, but contractor proposals will be required to identify critical technologies during the source selection, period from April to September 2007. According to program officials, critical technologies must be approaching maturity and demonstrated in a relevant environment prior to the start of development in October 2007.

Other Program Issues

As one component of a family of systems, BAMS UAS is intended to serve as an adjunct to the Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft (MMA). The program intends to colocate BAMS UAS mission crews with Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance (MPR) Forces to allow operators to closely coordinate missions and utilize common support infrastructure. BAMS UAS will share its persistent intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance role with MMA. If the BAMS UAS does not develop as planned or continues to experience schedule delays, the MMA is its fallback, and according to the Navy, the overall cost of the MMA program would increase due to a need to procure additional aircraft.

The Navy's Aerial Common Sensor (ACS), a cooperative Army-led program, was the replacement for the Navy's current airborne intelligence platform, the EP-3. It, in conjunction with MMA and BAMS UAS is intended to constitute the MPR family of systems. Due to a significant increase in the weight of ACS, the Army terminated the development contract. According to BAMS UAS officials, problems with the ACS have not affected the BAMS UAS program and future spirals may include planned ACS capabilities such as signals intelligence.

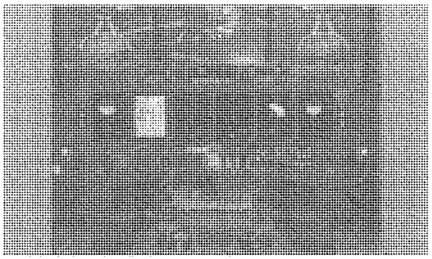
The program is seeking government-to-government dialogue and exchange of information among allied and friendly nations that have common maritime surveillance needs. Program officials indicated that several nations have expressed interest in possible participation in the program.

Agency Comments

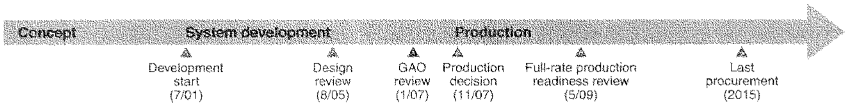
The BAMS UAS program office provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

C-130 Avionics Modernization Program (C-130 AMP)

The Air Force's C-130 AMP standardizes the cockpit configurations and avionics for 13 different mission designs of the C-130 fleet. It provides Navigation/Safety modifications and Communication Navigation Surveillance/Air Traffic Management upgrades; installs a Terrain Avoidance Warning System; replaces weather avoidance radars, compass systems, and dual autopilots; installs dual flight mangement systems; and provides high frequency, ultra high frequency, and very high frequency datalinks.



Source: C-130 Avionics Modernization Program, System Program Office.



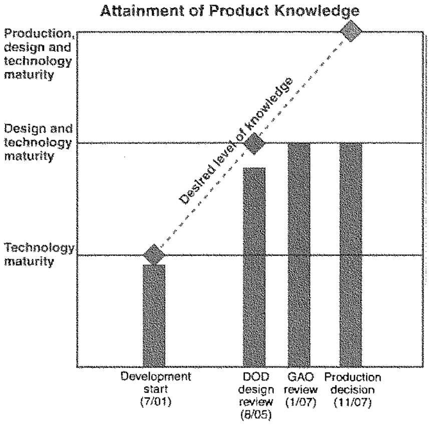
Program Essentials
Prime contractor: Boeing
Program office: Dayton, Ohio
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of 07/2001	Latest 12/2006	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	TBD	TBD	TBD

According to the program office, the C-130 AMP technologies are mature and the design is stable for the basic combat delivery aircraft. However, production maturity is unknown because the program has not collected key manufacturing information and flight testing just began. The production decision has been delayed 17 months since last year's review. This allows time for more flight testing before making a production decision in November 2007. However, the program will have limited flight testing completed of a fully integrated, capable version of the basic configuration. Estimated costs for the program are expected to increase. In October 2006, the Air Force Cost Analysis Improvement Group estimated the total program cost at over twice the current cost estimate. An updated acquisition strategy reflecting the results of the program restructuring has yet to be approved.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



C-130 AMP Program

Technology Maturity

All of the C-130 AMP's six critical technologies are fully mature.

Design Stability

The C-130 AMP basic configuration is stable with nearly all of the expected drawings released. The basic configuration is critical because it provides the foundation for all 13 mission system designs. The program completed its critical design review in August 2005 for the basic configuration. However, during installation trials to demonstrate system integration, program officials realized that they did not have a sound understanding of the installation complexity. As a result, drawings have been revised based on the lessons learned, and the program acknowledges that additional drawings or changes may be needed to incorporate the unique features of each variant.

Production Maturity

The program did not collect statistical process control data during development. Program officials stated that details on what data they will collect regarding manufacturing processes and quality control have yet to be defined for low-rate initial production. The Milestone B approved exit criteria established the production readiness review as one of the three criteria the C-130 AMP must meet to begin low-rate production in 2008. According to the program office, a low-rate production readiness review will be held in May 2007, and a full-rate production readiness review is scheduled for May 2009.

Since last year's review, the production decision has been delayed 17 months. The program office stated that the program will now have more than two-thirds of total development test points completed for the basic configuration before entering the production phase. However, the program will have only limited flight testing completed with a fully integrated, capable version. Future design variants are scheduled for demonstrations even later and will be done concurrently, leaving little time for corrections if problems arise. An official from the Office of the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation, expressed similar concerns about the level of concurrent flight testing and production.

Other Program Issues

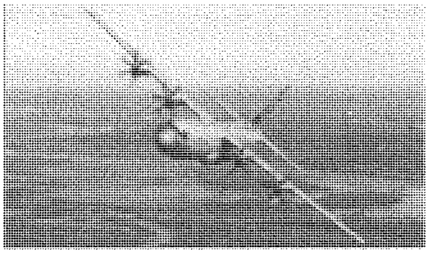
The program has been undergoing a program restructure for some time, putting the program in a state of flux. Since GAO's last review of the C-130 AMP, the program has encountered several delays in its schedule, the quantities expected to be purchased have been reduced by 31 aircraft, and the Special Operations Command removed funding from the C-130 AMP for the Common Avionics Architecture for Penetration program from fiscal year 2008 forward. In October 2006, the Air Force Cost Analysis Improvement Group estimated the total program cost at over twice the current cost estimate. According to the program office, an updated acquisition strategy, program baseline, and test plan are expected to be approved prior to the production decision in fiscal year 2008.

Agency Comments

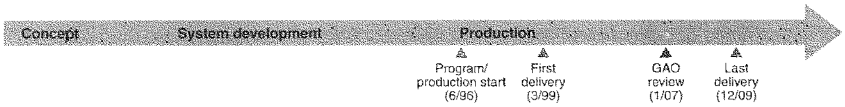
The Air Force provided technical comments on a draft of this assessment, which were incorporated where appropriate.

C-130J Hercules

The C-130J is the latest addition to DOD's fleet of C-130 aircraft and constitutes a major upgrade for the aircraft series. The aircraft is designed primarily for the transport of cargo and personnel within a theater of operation. Variants of the C-130J are being acquired by the Air Force (e.g., Air Mobility Command and Special Operations Command), Marine Corps, and Coast Guard to perform their respective missions. We reviewed the Air Force's C-130J program.



Source: C-130J Program Office (657th AESS), U.S. Air Force.



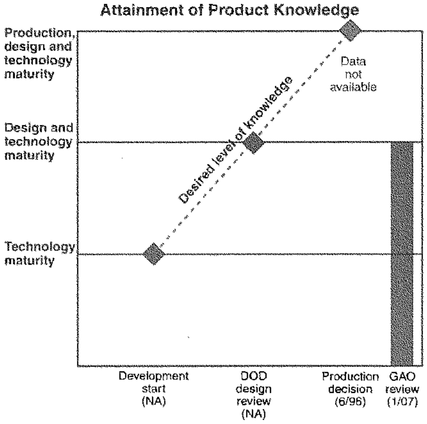
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The C-130J program was initiated at production in June 1996. We did not access technology, design, or production maturity because the Air Force does not have the information necessary to do so. Officials stated this is because the C-130J was originally procured as a commercial item that precluded DOD from obtaining the information. The program uses other means, such as Defense Contract Management Agency oversight of production, to assess maturity. In September 2006, DOD declared initial operational capability for the C-130J aircraft despite being rated as only partially mission capable in some areas. Program officials stated that options to address these shortfalls have been developed. In October 2006, the program completed the transition to a noncommercial negotiated contract to provide full insight into cost and pricing data for the remaining procurement of 39 C-130J aircraft.



C-130J Hercules Program

Technology Maturity

We did not assess the C-130J's critical technologies because, according to program officials, the technologies that make possible the major upgrades from earlier C-130 aircraft were assumed to be mature. Since the contractor initiated development of the C-130J at its own expense in the early 1990s, DOD took no responsibility for the system's technology maturity.

Design Stability

We did not assess the C-130J's design because, according to program officials, the Air Force does not have design drawings used to measure maturity. It believed the design was stable when the program was initiated, based on the fact that the C-130J was offered as a commercial item and evolved from an earlier C-130 design. However, when compared to earlier C-130 models the C-130J's development was approximately 70 percent new effort. Design changes provided major improvements such as a new propulsion system, an advanced integrated diagnostics system, a glass cockpit, digital avionics, and cargo compartment enhancements. Despite being considered a commercial development, the C-130J encountered numerous deficiencies early on that had to be corrected in order to meet minimum warfighter requirements. Other design shortfalls have recently been discovered which impact the aircraft's ability to meet its airdrop operations requirements. Program officials stated that options to address these shortfalls have been developed.

Production Maturity

We did not assess the production maturity of the C-130J because, according to program officials, the Air Force does not have data to show the total number of key product characteristics, the maturity of critical manufacturing processes, or capability indices. Program officials stated this is because the C-130J was originally procured as a Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 12 commercial item, which limits DOD's access to the full range of contractor manufacturing process information. Further, officials stated that the program's recent conversion to a noncommercial FAR Part 15 (negotiated) contract did not increase their visibility into these types of production metrics. The program relies on oversight by the Defense Contract Management Agency at the contractor's facility to ensure that the C-130J aircraft is manufactured in accordance with applicable standards and contactor critical manufacturing process documents.

Other Program Issues

According to program officials, Air Mobility Command declared the aircraft's initial operational capability in September 2006. Yet, in April 2006, DOD testing officials reported several shortfalls with substantial operational impact resulting in the aircraft being rated as only partially mission capable. Program officials plan to address future Air Force needs and correct deficiencies identified during operational testing with ongoing modernization efforts funded by DOD and foreign military customers.

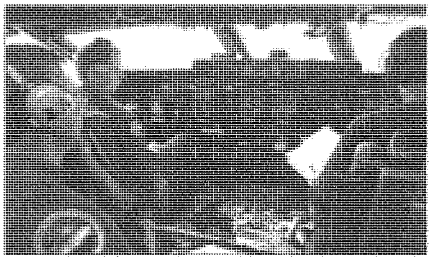
The program office was directed to change the acquisition of C-130J aircraft from a FAR Part 12 commercial item acquisition to a non-commercial Part 15 negotiated acquisition to provide full insight into cost and pricing of the aircraft. In response, a definitized contract was negotiated in October 2006 for the remaining procurement of 39 aircraft. Program officials estimate the Air Force will save approximately $168 million by converting to a noncommercial negotiated acquisition.

Agency Comments

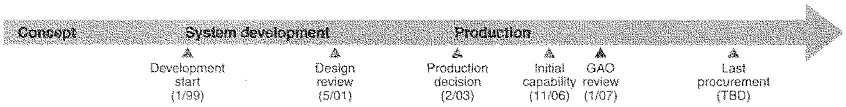
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Air Force provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

C-5 Avionics Modernization Program (C-5 AMP)

The Air Force's C-5 AMP is the first of two major upgrades for the C-5 to improve the mission capability rate, transport capabilities and reduce ownership costs. The AMP implements Global Air Traffic Management, navigation and safety equipment, modern digital equipment, and an all-weather flight control system. The second major upgrade, the C-5 Reliability Enhancement and Reengining Program (RERP), replaces the engines and modifies the electrical, fuel, and hydraulic systems. We assessed the C-5 AMP.



Source: Lockheed-Martin Aeronautics Company.



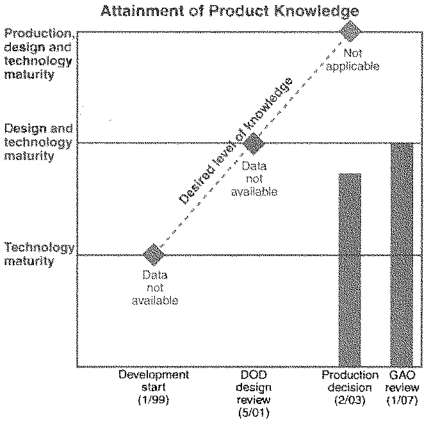
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The program's technologies and design are considered mature. We could not assess production maturity as the components are commercial-off-the-shelf items that are installed in other commercial and military aircraft. However, according to a DOD test official the program has many maintenance issues including 240 deficiencies, the most severe include the autopilot disconnecting during flight, flight management system problems, and engine display issues that were identified during testing. The program has a contract in place to fix many deficiencies, while a block upgrade is being considered to address more significant deficiencies. An Air Force mobility study recommended modification of all 111 C-5 aircraft. However, according to program officials, they currently do not have the funds to modify 52 aircraft. Future budgets will address funding for the remainder of the fleet.



C-5 AMP Program

Technology Maturity

We did not assess the C-5 AMP's critical technologies because the program used commercial technologies that are considered mature.

Design Stability

The program reports that the contractor has released all of the drawings for the AMP. Last year we reported that the C-5 AMP had released 100 percent of its drawings; however, due to modifications in the design, 270 drawings were added. As a result, the program had completed only 54 percent of the total number of drawings for the system by the time of the production decision.

Production Maturity

We could not assess the production maturity because most components are readily available as commercial off-the-shelf items. This equipment is being used on other military and commercial aircraft. To ensure production maturity, the program office is collecting data regarding modification kit availability and the installation schedules.

The program still has not demonstrated that the system will work as intended and is reliable. In fiscal year 2006, officials halted the flight test program for over 6 months due to problems resulting mainly from maintenance technical orders and maturity issues. Testing activities were eventually resumed in April 2006 and operational testing was completed in June 2006. According to a test official, there are still many outstanding maintenance issues for the program, including 240 deficiencies. Among those deficiencies, the three most severe problems affect safety of flight and require corrective action, including the autopilot disconnecting during flight, flight management system problems, and engine display issues. The program office has a contract in place to fix many deficiencies as part of sustainment, and a block upgrade is being considered to address the more significant deficiencies. In addition, there are 14 requirements for the program that have been delayed for 2 years but should have been met by August 2005, two of which are major program requirements that concern takeoff and landing data. Some of the 14 requirements will be addressed by the RERP program and others may be addressed by the block upgrade program. According to the test official, the C-5 AMP officials consider development complete.

Other Program Issues

In February 2006, the C-5 AMP program was reclassified as a Major Defense Acquisition Program. Over the past 2 years, the program has run into significant problems while trying to complete software development that have impacted the cost and schedule of the program. Most notably, a software build was added to fix problems with AMP integration, flight management system stability, and system diagnostics. The added build caused a $23 million cost overrun, which was paid for by shifting funds from the RERP program and extended developmental testing to 10 months.

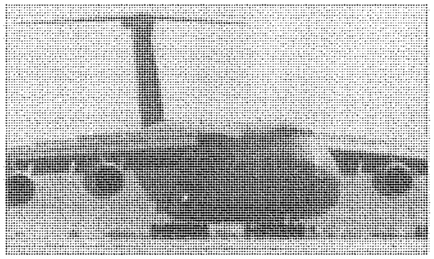
Last year we reported that the Air Force was conducting mobility studies to determine the correct mix of C-5 and C-17 aircraft it would need in the future. The study was issued in 2006 and recommended modification of all 111 C-5 aircraft. However, according to C-5 program officials they currently do not have the funds to modify the remaining 52 aircraft. To fund the modifications could cost nearly $800 million based on current unit cost.

Agency Comments

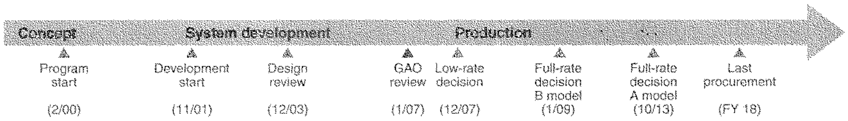
The Air Force provided technical comments to a draft of this assessment, which were incorporated as appropriate.

C-5 Reliability Enhancement and Reengining Program (C-5 RERP)

The Air Force's C-5 RERP is one of two major upgrades for the C-5. RERP is designed to enhance the reliability, maintainability, and availability of the C-5 through engine replacement and modifications to subsystems, i.e., electrical and fuel, while the C-5 Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) is designed to enhance the avionics. The upgrades are part of a two-phased modernization effort to improve the mission capability rate, performance, and transport throughput capabilities and reduce total ownership costs. We assessed the C-5 RERP.



Source: Edwards AFB, CA. Photo taken by LM Aero.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (2/00)
Development start (11/01)
Design review (12/03)
GAO review (1/07)
Low-rate decision (12/07)
Full-rate decision B model (1/09)
Full-rate decision A model (10/13)
Last procurement (FY 18)

Program Essentials

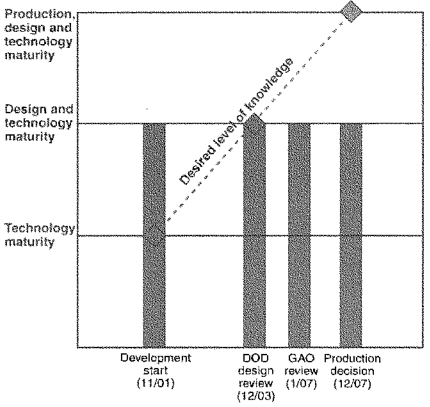
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The program's technologies are mature and the design is stable. We did not assess production maturity because the Air Force is buying commercially available items. The program recently delayed the low-rate initial production decision by 1 year because of cost pressures with the first production unit and Berry Amendment issues (requirement to use U.S. sources) with the engine. These issues contributed to a delay in awarding the long-lead contract for the first production unit. A major supplier has stated its unwillingness to bring their commercial manufacturing processes into Berry Amendment compliance. DOD is pursuing a waiver for this supplier. The Air Force expects to award the long-lead contract in April 2007, 14 months later than planned. This delay in production should allow the program more time for flight testing and to gain a better understanding of the kits' costs.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



C-5 RERP Program

Technology Maturity

The C-5 RERP's technologies are mature based on an independent technology readiness assessment conducted in October 2001.

Design Stability

According to program officials, the basic design of the C-5 RERP is stable. At the design review, the program had more than 90 percent of its drawing released. However, since then, a redesign of the pylon/thrust reverser was needed to address overweight conditions and safety concerns for the engine mount area. According to program officials, the redesign, now complete, contributed to a 4-month delay to the program.

Production Maturity

We did not assess the C-5 RERP's production maturity because the Air Force is buying commercially available items.

The program had planned to enter low-rate initial production in late 2006 without demonstrating through flight testing that the RERP would work as intended. However, program officials stated that this decision has been delayed until December 2007 due to upward production cost pressures and Berry Amendment specialty metal issues (requirements to use U.S. sources) with the engine. The program has not yet awarded the initial contract to purchase the long-lead items for the first production unit, which was expected to be awarded in February 2006, because of supplier noncompliance with the Berry Amendment (10 U.S.C. 2533a). A major supplier has specifically stated its unwillingness to bring their commercial manufacturing process into compliance, citing increased costs in domestic specialty metals and the risk compliance poses to its competitiveness in the global marketplace. According to program officials, the Air Force considered several options and is now pursuing a waiver to resolve issues concerning Berry Amendment compliance. Program officials currently estimate the long-lead contract will be awarded in April 2007, 14 months later than originally planned. In addition, Air Force officials have indicated that cost pressures with the engine also contributed to this delay. This delay in production should allow the program more time for flight testing and to gain a better understanding of the production costs

Other Program Issues

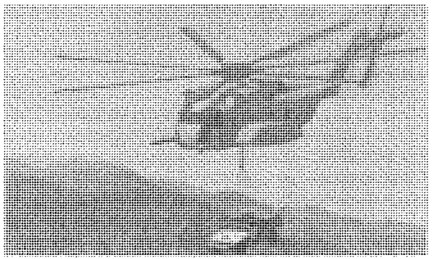
The C-5 RERP is dependent on the C-5 AMP because the aircraft must undergo AMP modifications prior to RERP modifications. A recent DOD study on mobility recommended modification of all 111 C-5 aircraft. However, according to Air Force officials they currently do not have the funds to modify 52 C-5 AMP aircraft. In addition, the C-5 AMP has performance shortfalls that need to be fixed. According to the program office, it has a sustainment contract in place to fix some of the deficiencies, but a block upgrade program will be needed to fix the more significant deficiencies. The Air Force expects to request funds for the block upgrade program beginning in fiscal year 2010.

Agency Comments

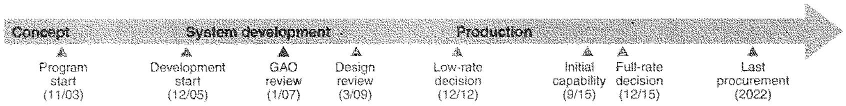
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Air Force stated that the risk associated with entering production before flight testing has been completed is being partially mitigated by two operational assessments. The favorable results of the first operational assessment supports the long-lead production decision review by the Air Force. Other technical comments were provided and incorporated as appropriate.

USMC CH-53K Heavy Lift Replacement (HLR)

The Marine Corps' CH-53K system will perform the marine expeditionary heavy-lift assault transport of armored vehicles, equipment, and personnel to support distributed operations deep inland from a sea-based center of operations. The CH-53K program is expected to replace the current CH-53E helicopter with a new design to improve range and payload, survivability and force protection, reliability and maintainability, coordination with other assets, and overall cost of ownership.



Source: Sikorsky Aircraft Company, © 2003 Sikorsky Aircraft Company.



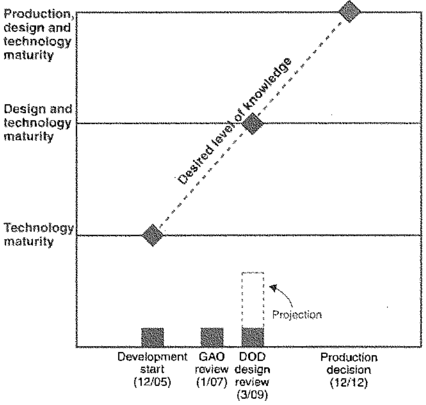
Program Essentials
Prime contractor: Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation
Program office: Patuxent River, MD
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: $[illegible] million
Procurement: $11,274.6 million
Total funding: $[illegible] million
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of NA	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	NA	$[illegible]	NA
Procurement cost	NA	$11,274.6	NA
Total program cost	NA	$[illegible]	NA
Program unit cost	NA	$[illegible]	NA
Total quantities	NA	[illegible]	NA
Acquisition cycle time (months)	NA	[illegible]	NA

The CH-53K program entered system development in December 2005 without demonstrating that its 3 critical technologies had reached full maturity. The program expects one of these technologies to reach full maturity in 2009 and the remaining two technologies to be mature by 2012, three years after the program's design review. While an initial readiness assessment for the program identified 10 critical technologies, a subsequent assessment reduced that number to 3. Elements of the 7 eliminated technology areas, including the engines, are not considered critical, although they may still present challenges to the program as many of them are currently being developed or used by other programs and will be integrated later into the CH-53K.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



CH-53K Program

Technology Maturity

The three critical technologies for the CH-53K program—the main rotor blade, the main gearbox, and the main rotor viscoelastic lag damper—are not fully mature. The viscoelastic lag damper, which serves to prevent excessive blade lagging, is expected to be fully mature by 2009, while the other two technologies are expected to be fully mature by 2012.

The main rotor blade will be 6 percent longer than that of the CH-53E and will require improved performance to meet the vertical lift requirement. Current testing of smaller-scale models of the rotor blades is expected to demonstrate increased maturity for the main rotor blade, with the actual sized main rotor blade achieving full maturity by 2012.

The main gearbox is not mature. While other helicopters have utilized similar technology for greater loads, they differed from the CH-53K in operational requirements. Tests of the gearbox later this year are expected to demonstrate increased maturity, while full maturity is expected by 2012.

A viscoelastic lag damper similar to that planned for use is currently in operation on other helicopters. However, while currently approaching full maturity, it must be resized for use on the larger CH-53K rotor head and will not reach full maturity until 2009. The viscoelastic lag damper is expected to result in improvements in maintainability and supportability over the hydraulic damper used on the CH-53E. Prototype dampers are currently being procured and testing of their damping characteristics is scheduled for later this year.

An assessment conducted in September 2004 reduced 10 original critical technologies to the 3 above. Of the 7 eliminated technologies, 2 are being developed by the CH-53K program and 5 are being developed by or used on other programs and will be integrated onto the CH-53K platform. While the program does not anticipate problems with the 5 technologies, they are dependent on the development and maturity schedules of the other programs.

Design Stability

We did not assess the design stability of the CH-53K because the total number of drawings expected is not known at this time.

Other Program Issues

Due to unexpected attrition of CH-53E aircraft, the need for an operational replacement has increased, resulting in the return of decommissioned CH-53Es to operational status. Supplemental funding has been provided to reclaim five aircraft, and funding has been requested to reclaim two more while the program continues to review the condition of remaining aircraft.

Currently deployed CH-53E aircraft have flown at three times the planned utilization rate. This operational pace is expected to result in higher airframe and component repair costs, including short-term fatigue repairs necessary to minimize CH-53E inventory reductions until CH-53K deliveries reach meaningful levels.

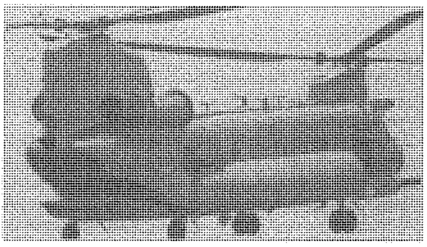
To address these challenges, the program intends to manufacture 29 of the 156 total helicopters (19 percent) during low-rate initial production and concurrent with initial operational testing. While concurrent production may help to field the systems sooner, it could also result in greater retrofit costs if unexpected design changes are required.

Agency Comments

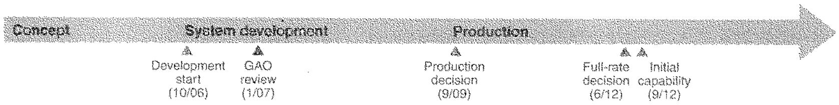
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Navy stated that the CH-53K Program conducted a Technology Readiness Assessment in September 2004, which assessed 10 candidate technologies. Three of those technologies met the criteria for designation as critical technology elements (CTE): main rotor blade, main gearbox, and the visoelastic lag damper. According to the Navy's comments, the technology readiness level (TRL) of the visoelastic lag damper was assessed as a model or prototype demonstrated in a relevant environment and the main rotor blade and main gearbox were assessed as components in a lab environment. Further, the Navy stated that the CH-53K Program has a technical maturation plan to achieve maturity of these three CTEs by Milestone C in 2012, which is progressing as planned, and risk due to these CTEs is considered low. This plan was staffed through the Director of Defense Research and Engineering (DDR&E) and is reviewed semiannually by DDR&E.

Combat Search and Rescue Replacement Vehicle (CSAR-X)

The Combat Search and Rescue Replacement Vehicle (CSAR-X) is planned to provide the United States Air Force with a vertical take-off and landing aircraft that is quickly deployable and capable of main base and austere location operations for worldwide CSAR and personnel recovery missions. The CSAR-X will be developed in two blocks and will replace the aging HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter fleet. We assessed CSAR-X Block 0, the first block to be developed.



Source: 669 AESS/TH CSAR-X Program Office.
Note: Photo is of the HH-60 Pavehawk, the aircraft the CSAR-X will replace.


Concept
System development
Production
Development start (10/06)
GAO review (1/07)
Production decision (9/09)
Full-rate decision (6/12)
Initial capability (9/12)

Program Essentials

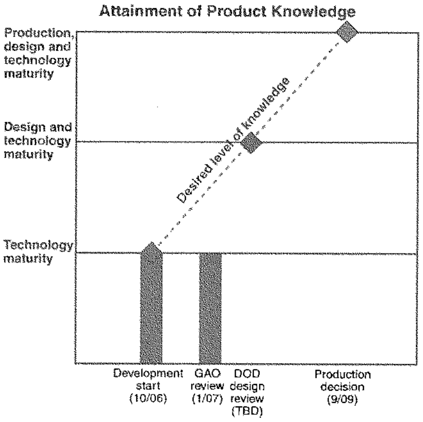
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

CSAR-X program officials report that all of the critical technologies for Block 0 were mature before the program committed to product development in October 2006. The development contract was awarded to Boeing in November 2006, but a bid protest by competitors was filed with GAO and has required the program to suspend development activities. The protest was sustained in February 2007 and the Air Force is currently considering its response to the GAO recommendation. Information regarding design stability and production maturity was not available at the time of this review.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



CSAR-X Program

Technology Maturity

CSAR-X program officials identified eight critical technologies for Block 0 and report that all eight were mature before development start. They also identified a number of other critical technologies expected to support Block 10, but did not provide data on their levels of maturity. These additional technologies will be assessed prior to the start of Block 10 development.

Other Program Issues

CSAR-X is being managed as an incremental development program. Block 0, the block assessed in this review, and Block 10 will be managed as separate programs, each with its own requirements, program baseline, and milestone reviews.

The initiation of CSAR-X Block 0 development has been delayed several times. According to program officials, the largest part of the schedule slip resulted from the Air Force adding $849 million to the program's future budget to move the beginning of Block 10 development ahead 2 years, from 2011 to 2009, to more closely align with the scheduled conclusion of Block 0 development. As a result of those changes, the program office went back to the competitors and asked them to incorporate the new Block 10 development plan and funding profile into their proposals.

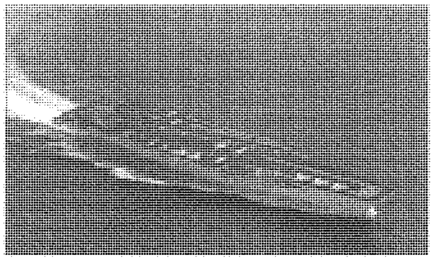
The Air Force awarded the CSAR-X Block 0 development contract to Boeing in November 2006. However, a bid protest by competitors challenging the award was filed with GAO, requiring the Air Force to suspend the beginning of product development activities. In February 2007, GAO sustained the protest, recommending that the Air Force amend the solicitation and request revised proposals. If the new evaluation results in a determination that Boeing's proposal no longer represents the best value to the government GAO recommended that the Air Force terminate its contract. The Air Force is currently considering its response to the GAO recommendation.

Agency Comments

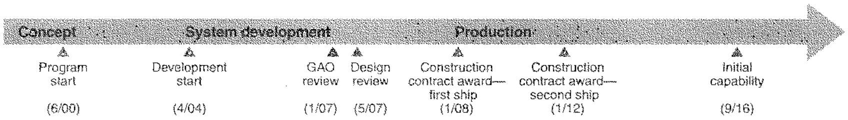
The Air Force provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Future Aircraft Carrier CVN-21

The Navy's CVN-21 class is the successor to the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier and includes a number of advanced technologies in propulsion, aircraft launch and recovery, weapons handling, and survivability. These technologies are to allow for increased sortie rates and decreased manning rates as compared to existing systems. Construction of the first ship of the class—CVN 78—is scheduled to begin in January 2008.



Source: CVN-21 Program Office.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (6/00)
Development start (4/04)
GAO review (1/07)
Design review (5/07)
Construction contract award—first ship (1/08)
Construction contract award—second ship (1/12)
Initial capability (9/16)

Program Essentials

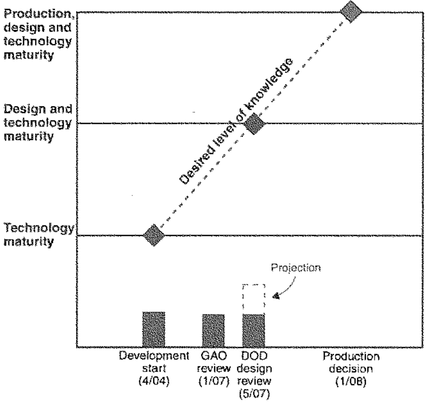
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

CVN 21 expects to have 6 of 17 current critical technologies fully mature and another 7 approaching maturity by critical design review now scheduled for May 2007. Program officials stated that the extended construction and design period allows further time for development. Fallback technologies still exist for 6 of 17 total critical technologies, but their use entails drawbacks, such as decreased performance and/or an increase in manpower requirements. While the design process appears on track, weight and stability issues have presented a challenge. In 2006 the Navy decided to delay awarding the contract for construction of the first two ships of the class by 1 year to meet other Navy priorities. The Navy expects to award the CVN 78 construction contract in January 2008.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



CVN-21 Program

Technology Maturity

Only 4 of CVN 21's 17 current critical technologies are fully mature—the nuclear propulsion and electrical plant, a new desalination system, the Multi-Function Radar, and a high strength alloy steel. A plasma-arc waste destruction system and the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launching System (EMALS) are expected to be fully mature and 7 are expected to be approaching maturity prior to critical design review. A total of 9 are expected to be fully mature in time for construction contract award in 2008. The program reported 16 critical technologies at development start, with as many as 22 technologies in 2006. Since last year's assessment, the Navy eliminated a technology; and redefined another.

Programs other than CVN-21 are developing 6 of the critical technologies—the Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG), a missile; Multi-Function Radar, Volume Search Radar, an automated weapon information system; and a GPS-based landing system—known as JPALS. Progress in those programs could affect the CVN-21 schedule. Four of these technologies have mature alternate systems as backups. No backup is feasible for the radars without major ship redesign. While the Multi-function Radar demonstrated maturity through at-sea testing, the Volume Search Radar will not achieve maturity until 2014 after operational testing on the future destroyer. Program officials stated that they will most likely install AAG—even if it is not fully mature when a decision to use a backup must be made. CVN 78's optimal build sequence could be impacted, if AAG is not delivered on time.

EMALS will replace steam catapults and is expected to demonstrate maturity through land based testing. EMALS will not be tested at sea, but officials believe that this testing is the only alternative designed to approximate an aircraft carrier environment.

The Navy eliminated an integrated inventory system and intended to pursue materials aimed at reducing carrier weight. The materials were ultimately eliminated because the Navy believes that it can already achieve its goals for ship weight and stability. Only high-strength and toughness steel is expected to be used on CVN 78.

Four critical technologies will not be mature until after construction start in 2008. While a self-propelled weapons loading device is not required until ship delivery in 2015, an armor protection system is needed for installation starting in 2009—the same year it is expected to demonstrate maturity. Risks associated with the 1,100-ton air conditioning plants are considered low since the components are available and used today, but this size has never been installed on a ship. Finally, the advanced weapons elevators are not expected to reach maturity until after shipboard system testing just prior to delivery.

Design Stability

A design review is currently planned for May 2007, but program officials stated that the design is regularly reviewed. Since the program does not measure design stability by percentage of drawings completed, it was not assessed according to this metric. Rather, the program measures progress in developing the product model. According to program officials, the ship is meeting its design targets—in part because of a 1 year delay in the construction contract, which resulted in additional time to develop the design. However, since a number of systems are still in development, the final design could be impacted.

Meeting the ship's requirements for weight and stability has been a challenge. EMALS and AAG have exceeded their allocated weight margins and weight must be compensated elsewhere on the ship. Additional degradation of its weight allowance could occur as the final designs for critical technologies become known.

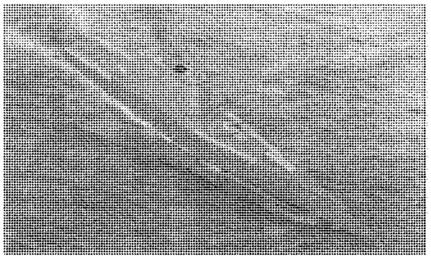
Agency Comments

The Navy concurred with our assessment, but emphasized that a lengthy construction period provides additional time to mature technologies. The Navy noted that technology readiness is closely managed through proven design processes, risk assessments, site visits, and contracting methods to ensure adequate maturity. Specific attention is given to requirements, legacy system availability, technology readiness, affordability, schedule, and return on investment. In addition, initial construction efforts aimed at validating new designs, tooling, and construction processes are already under way.

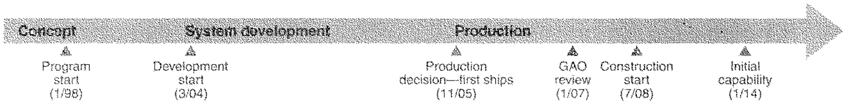
Finally, the Navy stressed that the decision to delay the program in 2006 was not related to technology maturity, weight, or stability issues.

DDG 1000 Destroyer

The Navy's DDG 1000—formerly known as DD(X)—destroyer is a multimission surface ship designed to provide advanced land attack capability in support of forces ashore and contribute to U.S. military dominance in littoral operations. The program awarded contracts for detail design and construction of two lead ships in August 2006. The program will continue to mature its technologies and design as it approaches construction start, currently planned for July 2008.



Source: PEO Ships (PMS 500), © 2006 DDG1000.com Northrop Grumman Ship Systems.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (1/98)
Development start (3/04)
Production decision—first ships (11/05)
GAO review (1/07)
Construction start (7/08)
Initial capability (1/14)

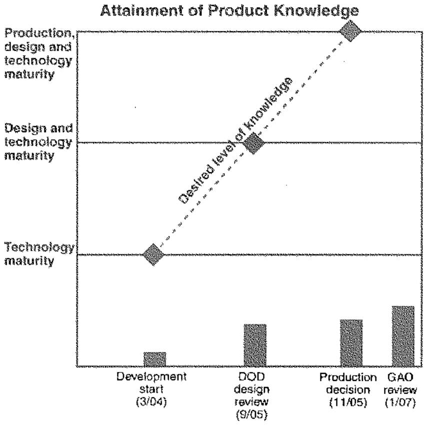
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

Three of DDG 1000's 12 critical technologies are fully mature. While 7 other technologies are approaching full maturity, 5 of them will not be fully mature until after ship installation as testing in a realistic environment is not considered feasible. The 2 remaining technologies—the volume search radar and total ship computing environment—have only completed component level demonstrations and subsequently remain at lower levels of maturity. Concurrent with its efforts to mature ship technologies, the Navy has initiated detail design activities in the program. While the Navy is planning to complete at least 75 percent of DDG 1000's total detail design products ahead of lead ship construction, any challenges encountered in remaining technology development activities could place this target at risk.



DDG 1000 Program

Technology Maturity

Three of DDG 1000's 12 critical technologies are fully mature. Seven other technologies, including the advanced gun system and its projectile, hull form, infrared signature mockups, integrated deckhouse, integrated power system, and peripheral vertical launching system, are approaching full maturity. The Navy currently plans to complete development of the integrated deckhouse and peripheral vertical launching system prior to beginning construction on DDG 1000's two lead ships. However, practical limitations prevent the advanced gun system and its projectile, hull form, integrated power system, and infrared signature mockups from being fully demonstrated in an at-sea environment until after lead ship installation. Two other technologies—the volume search radar and total ship computing environment—remain at lower levels of maturity.

The volume search radar, along with the multi-function radar, together comprise DDG 1000's dual band radar system. While the multi-function radar has reached maturity, considerable testing remains for the volume search radar. The Navy is currently planning to install volume search radar equipment at a land-based test facility in March 2007. Following installation, the volume search radar will undergo land-based testing, which the Navy plans to complete by March 2008 in an effort to increase the radar's maturity prior to lead ship construction start in July 2008. However, full maturity of this technology will not occur until after ship installation. In addition, because the efforts are concurrent, there is risk that any delays or problems discovered in testing for the volume search radar could ultimately impact dual band radar production plans. According to Navy officials, in the event the volume search radar experiences delays in testing, it will not be integrated as part of the dual band radar into the deckhouse units that will be delivered to the shipbuilders. Instead, the Navy will have to task the shipbuilder with installing the volume search radar into the deckhouse, which program officials report will require more labor hours than currently allocated.

The Navy's total ship computing environment for DDG 1000 requires developing hardware infrastructure and writing and releasing six blocks of software code. Although development of the first three software blocks progressed in line with cost and schedule estimates, program officials report that changes in the availability of key subsystems developed external to the DDG 1000 program, introduction of nondevelopment items, and changes in program integration and test needs prompted the Navy to defer some of the functionalities planned in software release four to software blocks five and six, and full maturity of the integrated system will not be attained until after ship construction start.

Design Stability

The DDG 1000 program recently entered detail design phase. The Navy is now assessing design stability by reviewing detail design products, including system drawings, detail drawings, manufacturing drawings, and calculations and analyses. According to program officials, 175 of 3,723 (projected) detail design products for DDG 1000 have been completed. The Navy estimates that at least 75 percent of DDG 1000's total detail design products will be completed prior to start of lead ship construction in July 2008. Successfully meeting this target depends on maturing DDG 1000 technologies as planned.

Agency Comments

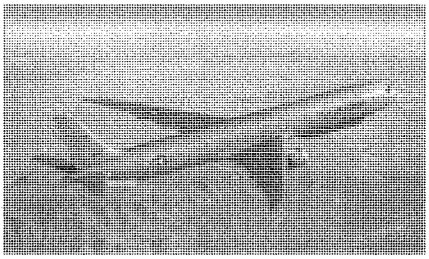
The Navy stated that our assessment was factually correct, but misleading in areas of technology maturity and program funding. According to the Navy, DDG 1000 critical technologies achieved technology readiness levels appropriate to gain authorization in November 2005 to enter detail design phase. Since that event, technologies have been further tested, and all are on track to meet cost and schedule targets. Also, given the unique nature of shipbuilding, with detail design and construction efforts spread over approximately 5 years, the Navy claimed that comparing DDG 1000 technology readiness levels to GAO-developed best practices criteria is not valid. Further, the Navy noted that GAO's cost comparison computing percent change from January 1998 to the current program baseline does not account for program progression through the acquisition cycle and may be misinterpreted as cost growth.

GAO Comments

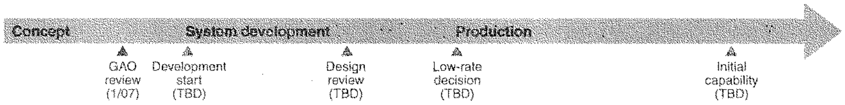
Our approach is valid because our work has shown that technological unknowns discovered late in development lead to cost increases and schedule delays.

E-10A Wide Area Surveillance Technology Development Program (TDP)

The Air Force's E-10A, equipped with the wide-area surveillance variant of the Multi-Platform Radar Technology Insertion Program (MP-RTIP) radar, is intended to provide next-generation air and ground moving target detection capabilities and an imaging capability for surface surveillance. The system is also intended to provide a battle management capability that will integrate other intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and weapons assets. The Boeing 767-400ER aircraft is being used as the TDP testbed.



Source: Northrop Grumman.



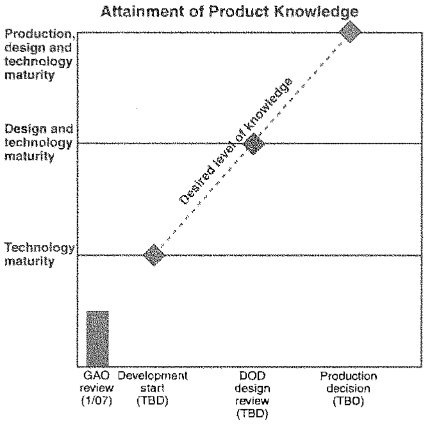
Program Essentials

Prime contractor: [illegible]
Program office: [illegible]
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	[illegible]	[illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The E-10A TDP has not yet started development. In May 2006, DOD approved the TDP acquisition, technology development, and test and evaluation strategies. The program has identified 18 critical technologies, five of which are currently assessed as being fully mature. The program projects that nearly all critical technologies will be fully mature by 2011—when the TDP demonstrations are scheduled for completion. The TDP demonstrations will include the live fire engagement of cruise missiles, the live fire engagement of ground targets, and the use of information services via internet protocol-enabled communication channels. The demonstrations constitute the TDP exit criteria. If an E-10A development program is initiated, capabilities will be acquired through an evolutionary acquisition process.



E-10A WAS TDP Program

Technology Maturity

Of the TDP's 18 critical technologies, 5 are fully mature, with the remaining 13 projected to be mature or approaching maturity by 2011. TDP technologies will be matured in two ways. In some cases, the technologies will be demonstrated on the E-10A testbed or in the system integration laboratory during the TDP test program. In other cases, the program office will monitor and leverage the advances made by other programs and agencies to mature relevant technologies.

Eight technologies will be matured directly by the TDP. The program projects that 7 of the 8 will be fully mature at the end of the TDP. The one critical technology that is projected to not reach full maturity is information assurance, which is projected to be approaching full maturity by the end of the TDP.

The other 10 critical technologies will be matured as part of program activities. For example, the narrowband communications critical technology is expected to be provided by the Joint Tactical Radio System, and the Wideband Beyond Line-of-Sight critical technology is expected to be provided by the Family of Advanced Beyond Line-of-Sight Terminals. The program projects that 9 of the 10 critical technologies will be fully mature at the end of the TDP; the remaining critical technology is projected to be either approaching full maturity or fully mature.

Other Program Issues

The E-10A's MP-RTIP radar is a modular, scalable, two-dimensional active electronically scanned radar. The MP-RTIP also supports the Global Hawk program. MP-RTIP will deliver a "large sensor" variant for the E-10A aircraft and a "small sensor" variant for the Global Hawk. The MP-RTIP development effort currently plans to provide two E-10A sensors and three Global Hawk sensors. The E-10A and Global Hawk programs will fund production of the MP-RTIP sensors for their respective operational platforms. The two E-10A MP-RTIP development sensors will be integrated into the E-10A system integration laboratory and testbed, and are scheduled for delivery in 2009 and 2010. The Global Hawk variants of the radar are scheduled for delivery in 2006, 2007, and 2008.

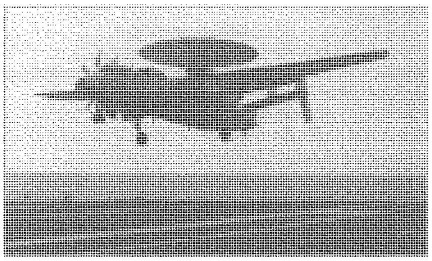
The MP-RTIP radar began development in 2003. The Global Hawk variant of the radar has 8 critical technologies and the E-10A has 1 additional critical technology (pulse compression unit) for a total of 9. The majority of the critical technologies have reached full maturity and the remaining critical technologies are approaching full maturity. Regarding design stability, all of the drawings expected are releasable for both variants of the MP-RTIP radar.

Agency Comments

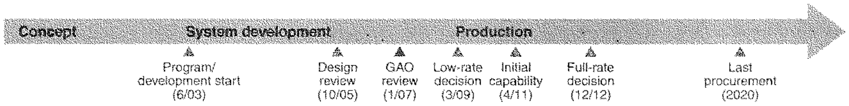
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Air Force concurred with the information provided in this report.

E-2D Advanced Hawkeye (E-2D AHE)

The Navy's E-2D AHE is an all-weather, twin-engine, carrier-based, aircraft designed to extend early warning surveillance capabilities. It is the next in a series of upgrades the Navy has made to the E-2C Hawkeye platform since its first flight in 1971. The E-2D AHE is designed to improve battle space target detection and situational awareness, especially in littoral areas; support Theater Air and Missile Defense operations; and improve operational availability.



Source: Program Executive Office, Tactical Aircraft Programs (PMA-231).


Concept
System development
Production
Program/ development start (6/03)
Design review (10/05)
GAO review (1/07)
Low-rate decision (3/09)
Initial capability (4/11)
Full-rate decision (12/12)
Last procurement (2020)

Program Essentials

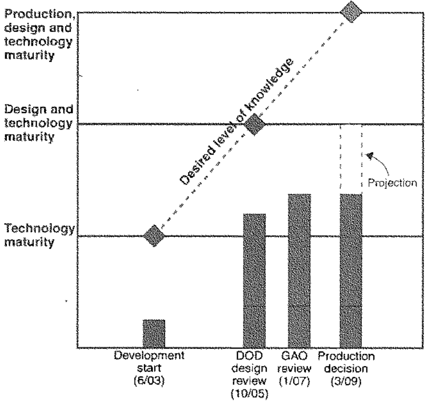
Prime contractor: Northrop Grumman Corp.
Program office: Patuxent River, Md.
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The E-2D AHE program entered system development in June 2003 with four immature critical technologies. Since that time, one of the program's four critical technologies has reached full maturity. Although the design met best practice standards at the time of the October 2005 design review, the total number of engineering drawings has subsequently increased. The program office reports that the design is almost 100 percent complete, but technology maturation and system integration may lead to more design changes or increased costs. We could not assess production maturity because the program does not plan to use statistical process controls.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



E-2D AHE Program

Technology Maturity

One of the E-2D AHE's four critical technologies (the space time adaptive processing algorithms) is mature. More mature backup technologies exist for the three remaining technologies: the rotodome antenna, a silicon carbide-based transistor for the power amplifier to support UHF radio operations, and the multichannel rotary coupler for the antenna. These technologies were flown on a larger test platform in 2002 and 2003. However, use of the backup technologies would result in degraded system performance and would not support aircraft weight and volume contraints as well as accommodate future system growth. Flight testing, which will include the four critical technologies, is planned to begin in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2007. The next AHE technology readiness assessment is to be performed prior to the low rate initial production decision in fiscal year 2009, and the program office anticipates that the remaining technologies will be mature at that time.

Design Stability

The program had completed 90 percent of planned drawings prior to the October 17, 2005 design review. However, the number of drawings required has since increased, driven primarily by underestimating total structural and wiring drawings, part discrepancies discovered during aircraft assembly, and rework associated with the prime contractor's new design software, which resulted in the need for unique drawings for suppliers. This increase in drawings means that the program had completed less than 75 percent of total drawings at design review. The program office reports that 99 percent of total drawings are complete and projects that 100 percent of the drawings will be complete by the planned start of production in March 2009. However, the technology maturation process may lead to more design changes.

The program office reported that the systems integration laboratory is being created this year and a fully integrated prototype will be delivered in 2007. Without the benefit of an integration laboratory or a prototype prior to entering the system demonstration phase, the program increases the likelihood that problems will be discovered late in development when they are more costly to address.

Production Maturity

The program expects a low-rate initial production decision in March 2009, but does not require the contractor to use statistical process controls to ensure its critical processes are producing high-quality and reliable products. According to the program, the contractor assembles the components using manual, not automated, processes that are not conducive to statistical process control. The program relies on postproduction data, such as defects per unit, to track variances and nonconformance. The program also conducts production assessment reviews every 6 months to assess the contractor's readiness for production. The program has updated the manufacturing processes that were established and used for the E-2C over the past 30 years. The program considers the single station joining tool; the installation of electrical, hydraulic, and pneumatic lines; and the installation of the prime mission equipment all critical manufacturing processes.

The program is currently building the first two development aircraft. According to the program office, there are no significant differences in the manufacturing processes for the development aircraft and the production aircraft.

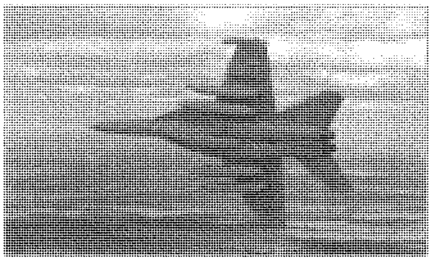
Agency Comments

In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Navy stated that the E-2D AHE program is executing the development contract and critical technologies do not represent a high risk to the program at present. The increase in drawings is due to some suppliers not using modern technology, so rework was necessary by the prime contractor to convert the drawings to support legacy manufacturing processes.

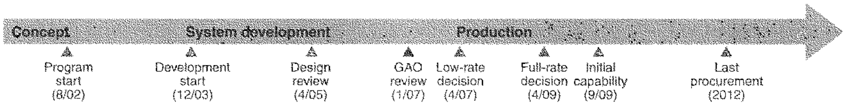
Flight testing, which will include the four critical technologies, is planned to begin in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2007. The test program will demonstrate design maturity of all technologies and capabilities. A Technology Readiness Assessment will be conducted prior to the low-rate production decision. Integration of statistical process controls would require significant Navy investment to update the E-2D aircraft manufacturing process. The Navy has elected not to make this investment due to the maturity of the 30-plus-year E-2 production history.

EA-18G

The EA-18G Growler aircraft will replace the carrier-based EA-6B and provide electronic warfare capability to the Navy beginning in 2009. It is a combination of the Improved Capability (ICAP) III electronic suite and the F/A-18F platform. The EA-6B now provides support to the Navy as well as the Air Force and Marine Corps. Only 14 EA-6Bs have been funded to receive the ICAP III. Plans to develop a joint service airborne electronic attack system of systems have not developed as planned.



Source: ©2006 US Navy.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (8/02)
Development start (12/03)
Design review (4/05)
GAO review (1/07)
Low-rate decision (4/07)
Full-rate decision (4/09)
Initial capability (9/09)
Last procurement (2012)

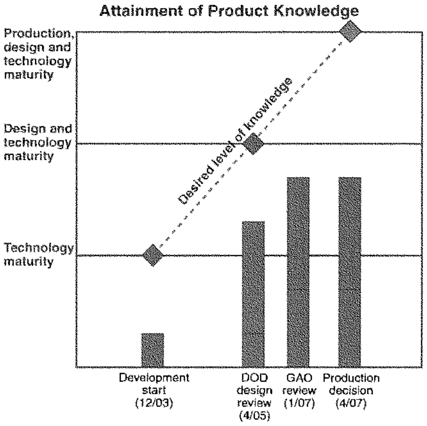
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The EA-18G entered system development without demonstrating that its five critical technologies had reached full maturity, but has since made progress in maturing these technologies. However, all technologies are still not fully mature. The design appears stable, with almost all drawings complete. However, until all technologies demonstrate maturity, the potential for design changes remains. The program is executing a compressed development schedule to address an expected decline in the EA-6B inventory. However, upgrades have slowed the EA-6B inventory decline. The program now plans to reduce total procurement to 80 aircraft, but one third of the EA-18G aircraft will still be procured as low-rate initial production aircraft. Additional procurement and/or retrofit costs could occur if design deficiencies are discovered during the development and test phase.



EA-18G Program

Technology Maturity

None of the EA-18G's five critical technologies were mature when the program started development. Two of the critical technologies, the ALQ-99 pods and the F/A-18F platform, are mature. We assess the remaining three technologies—the ALQ-218 receiver system, the communications countermeasures set (CCS), and the tactical terminal system—as approaching full maturity. Software needed for full functionality of these technologies is not yet released. Tests to assess their performance will not occur until late fiscal year 2007.

The program considers the EA-18G development effort as low to medium risk because they consider the fielded F/A-18F aircraft and the ICAP III electronic suite mature. The program assessed all but the CCS mature because they include both what has been demonstrated as well as the level of development risk. We believe the assessment of the CCS is correct given that it will function on the EA-18G in a new environment with space constraints that will be a challenge. However, there are other technology form and fit challenges. The ALQ-218 receiver is being transferred from the EA-6B where it is housed in a larger pod on the vertical tail. For the EA-18G, the ALQ-218 has been redesigned to fit on the wing tips. This wing tip environment is known to cause severe under wing and wing tip noise and vibration that could degrade the performance of the receiver.

Design Stability

The design of the EA-18G appears to be stable. Program officials state that all drawings have been released and the design complete. However, flight tests are needed to verify the impact of loads on some of designs and whether redesign might be needed. In addition, the program continues to identify a number of risks that could impact eventual design and retrofit cost. One risk addresses the effect of vibration on reliability and performance of the wingtip pods for the ALQ-218 receiver. The effect of the wing tip environment on the performance and reliability of the ALQ-218 will not be known until flight tests are conducted. Currently all suitability performance measures and almost all ALQ-218 technical performance measures are based on calculated values. Actual values not are gathered until EA-18G flight tests are conducted. The first test EA-18G was delivered to the Navy for flight tests in September 2006. Schedules call for ALQ-218 flight performance tests to begin in February 2007 and operational tests in 2008. Initial operational capability for the EA-18G is planned for September 2009.

Production Maturity

We could not assess production maturity. The program does not collect statistical process control data. The program is executing a compressed development schedule to address an expected decline in EA-6B aircraft. Initial plans called for purchasing 90 EA-18Gs. The Navy/DOD is proposing to reduce the total quantity to 80 aircraft in the FY 2008 budget. The proposed reduction in procurement quantities from 90 to 84 is a result of re-evaluating inventory requirements in association with the Navy's proposed FY 2008 budget and the application of tiered readiness. A reduction totaling an additional 4 aircraft from the first low-rate initial production buy is also being considered, making the total procurement quantity 80 aircraft. Low-rate initial production aircraft will total one third of the total buy. This is significantly greater than the traditional DOD benchmark of 10 percent. Program officials state that the large initial production buy is driven in part by the scheduled replacement of the EA-6Bs due to the extensive flight hours on EA-6Bs, and the age of the existing inventory. However, in April 2006 we reported that EA-6B inventory levels were projected to meet the Navy's requirements at least until 2017.

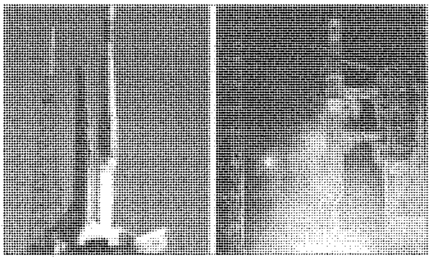
Program officials state that EA-18G development continues to meet or exceed all cost, schedule and technical performance requirements. They also state that flight tests performed to date have shown the Advanced Electronic Attack system is very mature, and that software is being delivered ahead of schedule. However, the program also reports that post operational test and evaluation efforts have been funded to correct any deficiencies discovered during these tests. Also, the production and/or retrofit cost to correct design deficiencies discovered during the development and test phase are excluded from the production contract price and would require separate contract authorization.

Agency Comments

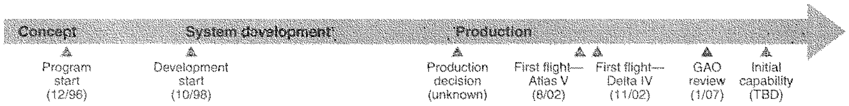
In commenting on a draft of this report, the Navy provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle (EELV) - Atlas V, Delta IV

The Air Force's EELV program acquires satellite launch services for military, intelligence, and civil missions from two families of launch vehicles—Atlas V and Delta IV. The program's goal is to preserve the space launch industrial base, sustain assured access to space, and reduce life cycle cost of space launches by at least 25 percent over previous systems. A number of vehicle configurations are available depending on the satellite vehicles weight and mission specifications. We assessed both the Atlas V and Delta IV.



Source: (Left) © 2005 ILS/Lockheed Martin; (right) © 2003 The Boeing Company.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (12/96)
Development start (10/98)
Production decision (unknown)
First flight—Atlas V (8/02)
First flight—Delta IV (11/02)
GAO review (1/07)
Initial capability (TBD)

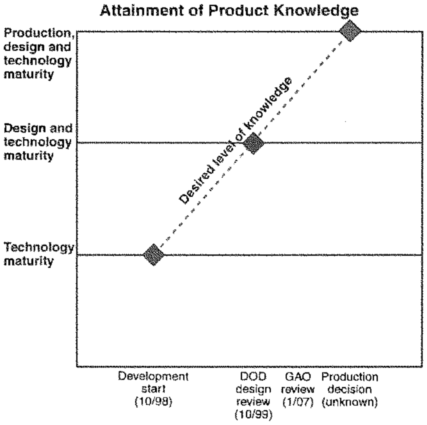
Program Essentials

Prime contractor: Boeing Launch Services, Lockheed Martin Space Systems
Program office: El Segundo, Calif.
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: $[illegible] million
Procurement: $[illegible] million
Total funding: $[illegible] million
Procurement quantity: TBD

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	TBD	TBD	[illegible]

While the EELV program office now has access to technology, design, and production maturity information, such data is treated as proprietary due to the commercial nature of the existing launch services contracts. Three launches occurred since GAO's last assessment—one government, one NASA and one commercial bringing the total launches to 14. In May 2005, Boeing Launch Services and Lockheed Martin Space Systems announced an agreement to create a joint venture (United Launch Alliance, or ULA) that will combine production, engineering, test, and launch operations associated with U.S. government launches of Boeing Delta and Lockheed Martin Atlas rockets. In October 2006, the Federal Trade Commission announced its acceptance, subject to final approval, of an agreement containing a consent order with Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and ULA.



EELV Program

Technology Maturity

We could not assess the technology maturity of EELV because the Air Force has not formally contracted for information on technology maturity from its contractors.

Design Stability

We could not assess the design stability of EELV because the Air Force has not formally contracted for the information needed to conduct this assessment.

Production Maturity

We could not assess the production maturity of EELV because the Air Force has not formally contracted for information that would facilitate this assessment.

Other Program Issues

To meet national security space needs, congressional mandates, and national space transportation policy requirements for assured access to space, the government is sharing a level of risk with the launch providers through a new program strategy for EELV launches. Implemented in 2006, the strategy is expected to cover missions scheduled to launch starting in 2008. In 2005, the Air Force released requests for proposals for EELV launch services and EELV launch capabilities contracts. The Air Force awarded a cost plus award fee contract for launch capabilities to Lockheed Martin in February 2006 and to Boeing Launch Services in November 2006. The Air Force is currently negotiating a firm fixed price contract with a mission success incentive with Lockheed Martin for EELV launch services. The launch services contract with Boeing will follow.

As part of the proposed joint venture, the contractors expect to combine the Atlas V and Delta IV production at the Boeing plant in Decatur, Alabama, and engineering at the Lockheed Martin Facility in Denver, Colorado. The Federal Trade Commission has provisionally accepted a consent order regarding the joint venture. The proposed consent order was placed on public record for 30 days and addresses ancillary competitive harms that DOD has identified as not inextricably tied to the national security benefits of the proposed joint venture between Lockheed Martin and Boeing Launch Services. The Federal Trade Commission is currently reviewing public comments on the proposed consent order.

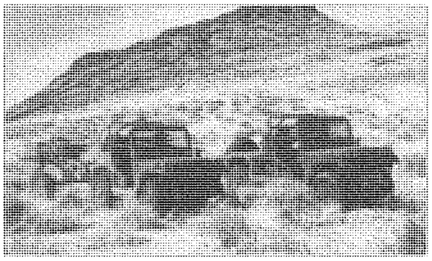
A 2006 congressionally mandated study on future launch requirements concluded that the EELV program can satisfy the nation's military space launch needs through 2020. However, the study noted that it is important to revalidate the requirements for heavy lift capability, assured access to space, the RL-10 upper stage, and the use of the Russian-built RD-180 engines in parallel with cost and performance assessments. According to EELV program officials, the program office is continually engaged on these issues, which under the new contract structure and the ULA joint venture can be more easily addressed.

Agency Comments

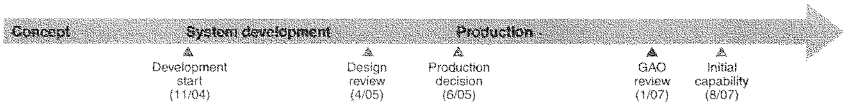
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Air Force stated that the program is transitioning from a commercial services program, with limited insight, to a more traditional government program with full cost and program oversight. According to the Air Force, the transition will be completed in 2007 when both providers are awarded the EELV launch services contracts. Program officials also provided technical comments, which were incorporated where appropriate.

Expeditionary Fire Support System (EFSS)

The Marine Corps' EFSS includes a launcher, prime mover, ammo prime mover, and ammunition. It will be the primary fire support system for the vertical assault element of the Marine Corps' Ship to Objective Maneuver force and is designed to be internally transportable by the MV-22 and CH-53E. The EFSS prime mover is a variant of the Internally Transportable Vehicle (ITV), which is being developed in a separate program, but under common management with EFSS. We assessed all components of the EFSS.



Source: EFSS/ITV Program Office, Marine Corps Systems Command.


Concept
System development
Production
Development start (11/04)
Design review (4/05)
Production decision (6/05)
GAO review (1/07)
Initial capability (8/07)

Program Essentials

Prime contractor: [illegible]
Program office: [illegible]
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

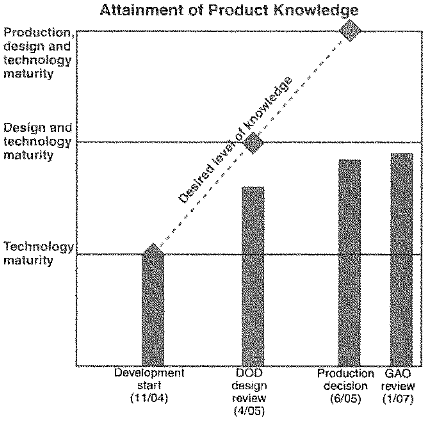
Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]

While the EFSS is in production, we could not assess production maturity as the program is not collecting statistical data on its production processes. However, according to the program office, an ITV operational assessment revealed manufacturing problems. In addition, the EFSS passed its design review and entered production without having achieved design stability. Deficiencies were identified during EFSS developmental testing of selected requirements. Although 18 requirements were fully met, 3 were not. Also, while other variants of the ITV have received an interim flight certification for the V-22, CH-53, and C-130 aircraft during the ITV operational assessment, the EFSS vehicle has not yet been certified as it was not a part of that assessment. The EFSS program has, however, completed about 95 percent of the certification indicating it can safely transport munitions on Navy ships.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



EFSS Program

Technology Maturity

We have assessed the EFSS as having mature technologies. Program officials have stated that the EFSS is relying on existing technologies.

Design Stability

The EFSS design was not stable at the time of the EFSS design review as only an estimated 60 percent of the system drawings were complete at that point. Furthermore, EFSS entered production still short of having obtained design stability, though it was nearing stability with 84 percent of the drawings completed. During ongoing ITV operational testing, the vehicle's half shaft (an axle component) did not perform adequately and there were problems with some fuel flow gauges. While most of the EFSS components are modified commercial-off-the-shelf items, the half shaft used during the ITV operational test was a custom-built item. The program office is now replacing it with a stronger commercial one to address the operational shortfalls noted. The operational assessment also revealed problems with the accuracy of the fuel gauges. Fixes for these deficiencies are undergoing reliability testing. As these issues are resolved, the EFSS design is expected to change.

The EFSS is currently an unarmored vehicle. In fiscal year 2007, Congress added $8 million to the EFSS program for armor kits. Because the program is constrained by weight and size requirements (a key performance parameter is its ability to be transported internally by the MV-22 aircraft and CH-53E helicopter), the program office is designing two types of kits. The "A" kit will be permanently attached and add about 60 pounds to the vehicle. The "B" kit will be added after the vehicle exits the aircraft and is expected to add an additional 85 pounds. Also, the program office is installing blast-attenuating seats on the EFSS vehicles. These changes will result in additional design modifications, as many lessons are learned in the course of further testing.

Production Maturity

We could not assess EFSS production maturity as the program is not collecting statistical control data on its production processes. The program is currently in low-rate initial production and is on schedule to enter full-rate production by the third quarter of fiscal year 2007. According to the program office, during the ongoing operational assessment of the ITV, EFSS experienced 24 failures—18 of which were associated with 2 components. The remaining 6 failures were associated with assembly problems. For example, 3 vehicles did not have their fuel pumps set at the right setting for the type of fuel used. According to the program office, these manufacturing problems remain a challenge for the program.

Other Program Issues

While an EFSS developmental test revealed that 3 of the 24 tested requirements were not met, officials said that to date all but 1 have been resolved. When placed in a firing position and with a projectile ready to load, the system should be able to fire the first round within 30 seconds. The average first round response time was 57.3 seconds with live fire. In addition, the program office told us it has successfully reduced the vehicle weight by 180 pounds, completed 95 percent of the process designed to ensure that the system can safely carry munitions on-board Navy ships, and will meet insensitive munitions requirements. In addition, other ITV variants have received interim flight certification for the V-22, CH-53, and C-130 aircraft. However, the EFSS vehicles have not yet been flight certified. However, according to the program office, all EFSS vehicles are on track for final certification by April 2007.

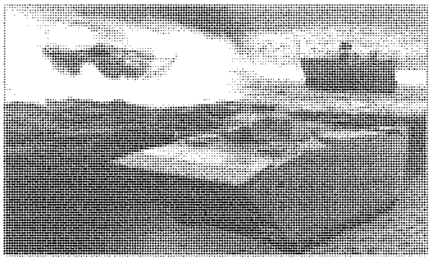
In addition to the internal EFSS program issues discussed above, the space available on the MV-22 constrains the EFSS vehicle design and weight. As a result, if the MV-22 interior design is altered, it could adversely impact the EFSS program. The V-22 program office is aware of these contraints and is committed to them.

Agency Comments

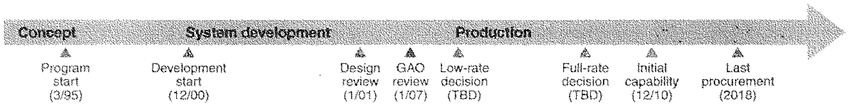
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the program office provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV)

The Marine Corps' EFV is designed to transport troops from ships offshore to their inland destinations at higher speeds and from longer distances than the system it is designed to replace, the Assault Amphibious Vehicle 7A1 (AAV-7A1). The EFV will have two variants—a troop carrier for 17 combat-equipped Marines and 3 crew members and a command vehicle to manage combat operations in the field. We assessed both variants.



Source: General Dynamics Land Systems.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (3/95)
Development start (12/00)
Design review (1/01)
GAO review (1/07)
Low-rate decision (TBD)
Full-rate decision (TBD)
Initial capability (12/10)
Last procurement (2018)

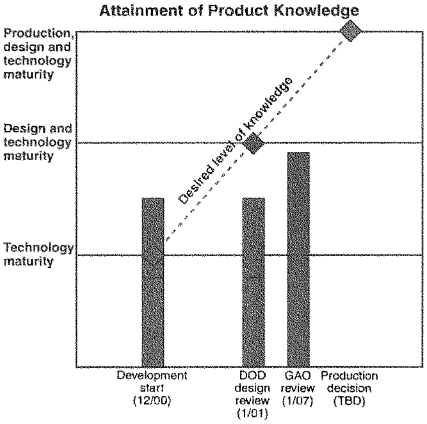
Program Essentials

Prime contractor: General Dynamics
Program office: Woodbridge, VA
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of 12/2000	Latest 08/2006	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The EFV's technologies are mature and the system design was thought to be stable. Given the recent discovery of problems associated with reliability, a decision on how to proceed is pending by the Marine Corps that could significantly impact the program cost, schedule, and quantity parameters. Congress recently zeroed out the EFV's fiscal year 2007 procurement budget request and directed that the EFV program extend its development phase. Further, growth in the number of lines of software code needed for the EFV vehicle continues and could contribute to the already escalating program cost growth.



EFV Program

Technology Maturity

All five of the EFV system's critical technologies are mature and have been demonstrated in a full-up system prototype.

Design Stability

The EFV has released 82 percent of its initial production design drawings to the manufacturer. The program had planned to release the remaining drawings before the production decision in December 2006. According to a program official, because of recent system reliability failures discovered during the early operational assessment (EOA) testing, the production decision has been delayed. During the recent EOA, the EFV failed to perform reliably and only achieved a fraction of the required operational goal of 43.5 hours of operations before maintenance was required.

Production Maturity

Congress recently zeroed out the EFV's fiscal year 2007 procurement budget request and directed that it extend its system development and demonstration phase. The Marine Corps is currently considering production options that could impact cost, schedule, and quantity parameters.

Other Program Issues

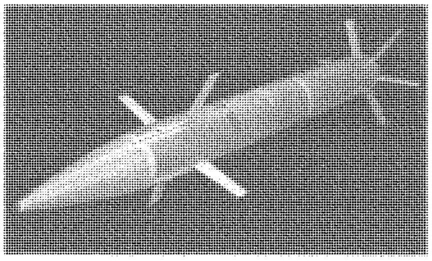
The EFV program relies on software to provide all electronic, firepower, and communication functions. The program is collecting metrics relating to cost, schedule, and quality and is using an evolutionary development approach. Nevertheless, software development continues to present a risk. The program continues to experience growth in the total lines of software code needed. Since development started in 2000, the total lines of software code required by the system has increased by about 238 percent, with approximately 36 percent of this amount being new code. Additionally, software planned for the EFV initial production version will be different from the software used in the SDD versions. Furthermore, software testing has identified 187 software defects. The Marine Corps testing agency identified software failure as a factor impacting the system's reliability. We believe that software issues could put the program at risk for cost growth. In addition, to the recently discovered reliability issues that will require some, yet, undisclosed system changes, the program is already planning changes to the EFV baseline program, which are driven by the Quadrennial Defense Review and the Strategic Planning Guidance.

Agency Comments

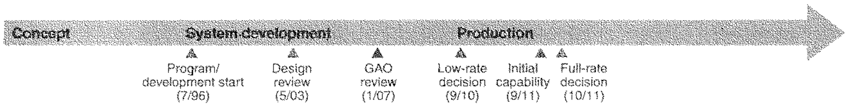
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Navy stated that the EFV program is being restructured as a result of proposed quantity reductions and to incorporate reliability performance improvements in the vehicle design. The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics was briefed on the program office's plans in October 2006, and has declined to make an acquisition decision. The Under Secretary has concurred with the Department of the Navy to convene an Independent Expert Program Review (IEPR) to examine the EFV program and recommend a path forward. The IEPR is scheduled for completion in December 2006, with a program review in the January-February 2007 time frame. After which, an acquisition path forward will be decided.

Extended Range Munition (ERM)

The Navy's ERM is a 5-inch, rocket-assisted projectile that will provide fire support to expeditionary forces operating near the littorals. ERM is being designed to fire to an objective range of 63 nautical miles using modified 5-inch guns onboard 32 Arleigh Burke class destroyers. ERM represents a continuation of the Navy's Extended Range Guided Munition program, which entered system development and demonstration in 1996. The Navy is currently restructuring the program to reflect an updated initial fielding date of 2011.



Source: Naval Gunnery Project Office, PEO IWS3C/Raytheon, ©2006 Raytheon.



Program Essentials

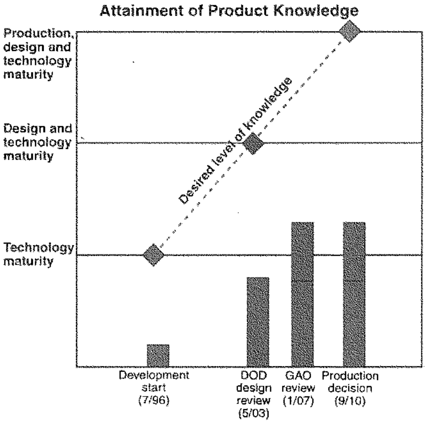
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The Navy identifies 17 critical technologies for ERM, 11 of which have reached maturity. A series of flight tests in 2005 revealed reliability problems with several ERM components. The Navy continues to evaluate data from these flight tests, but anticipates that design changes for some technologies may be required. In addition, the Navy has identified a number of obsolete components in the ERM design. As a result, ERM is undergoing significant redesign, and 63 percent of the munition's design drawings have been released to date. According to program officials, the Navy continues to evaluate plans and identify resources required for completing development of the munition. Until these plans are approved and performance of redesigned components is validated through testing, uncertainty remains on whether the Navy's goal to begin fielding ERM in 2011 is realistic.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



ERM Program

Technology Maturity

Eleven of ERM's 17 critical technologies are fully mature. Four technologies—the anti-jam electronics, control actuation system, data communication interface, and safe/arm device and fuze—are approaching full maturity. However, the Navy's maturity assessment for two technologies may need to be reduced pending reports from failure review boards the Navy initiated after ERM flight test failures in 2005. According to program officials, these review boards have preliminarily identified ERM's control actuation system and rocket motor igniter as potential contributors to the test failures, which could require redesign of these components. In addition, the Navy has encountered obsolescence issues with ERM's global positioning satellite receiver and inertial measurement unit technologies. As a result, program officials report they have had to identify alternative components for these technologies and redesign the munition to accommodate these new components. Until these replacement components are integrated and tested with the munition, the global positioning satellite receiver and inertial measurement unit technologies will remain at lower levels of maturity. Although program officials report that the Navy continues to evaluate schedule and cost options for completing ERM system development, a comprehensive test plan for the munition has not been established.

Design Stability

The program has released approximately 63 percent of ERM's anticipated 140 production representative engineering drawings. None of these drawings were released in time for the munition's May 2003 design review. Instead, the Navy conducted this review with less mature drawings and used them to validate the design of the developmental test rounds. According to program officials, recent changes to ERM components to address obsolescence and reliability issues have required significant redesign of the munition. Program officials state that this redesign process for ERM will be complete before further developmental tests are initated for the munition. The completed design will then be reviewed and certified by a mission control panel within the Navy.

Production Maturity

The Navy plans to collect statistical process control data for ERM once hardware production begins. According to Navy officials, approximately 60 ERM units will be built during system development using process control methods developed in the Excalibur program. The Navy anticipates that this strategy will result in mature production processes for ERM at the beginning of low-rate production.

Other Program Issues

As a result of challenges in developing ERM, the Navy awarded a demonstration contract in May 2004 for the Ballistic Trajectory Extended Range Munition (BTERM). This munition's rocket motor caused test failures that led the Navy to abandon plans to recompete the development contract for ERM. According to a Navy official, the Navy concluded that ERM was a more viable option for fielding a tactical round by fiscal year 2011, and it is no longer requesting funding for BTERM. Navy officials state a competition could still occur in 2011 for ERM production.

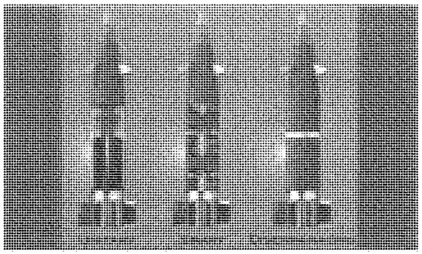
In August 2006, oversight of the ERM program was elevated by requiring that major programmatic decisions, such as approval of the Navy's estimate for resources needed for completion and the strategy for development and testing, be approved by the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics rather than by the Navy. While this restructuring has elevated oversight, program plans continue to evolve, and a comprehensive review of the program by the Under Secretary has not been performed.

Agency Comments

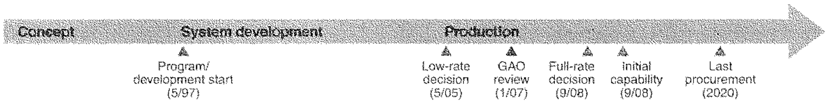
The Navy stated that a revised acquisition strategy and acquisition program baseline for ERM are under review by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition. In addition, the prime contractor for ERM, Raytheon, has conducted an extensive trade study and downselect process to minimize technical risk for replacing obsolete components. The Navy is also updating ERM's test and evaluation master plan to include three development test phases of 20 rounds each in fiscal years 2008 through 2010 as well as a 40-round shipboard operational test series in fiscal year 2011. Each test series must be successfully completed as defined in annual continuation criteria certified by ERM's milestone decision authority. In addition, contractor production processes will be evaluated as part of an open competition for initial and full-rate production of ERM.

Excalibur Precision Guided Extended Range Artillery Projectile

The Army's Excalibur is a family of global positioning system-based, fire-and-forget, 155-mm cannon artillery precision munitions intended to improve the range and accuracy of cannon artillery. The Excalibur's near vertical angle of fall should reduce collateral damage area around the intended target, making it more effective in urban environments than the current projectiles. The Future Combat System's non-line-of-sight cannon requires the Excalibur to meet its required range. Only the unitary variant block is currently being developed.



Source: PM Excalibur and Raytheon.



Program Essentials

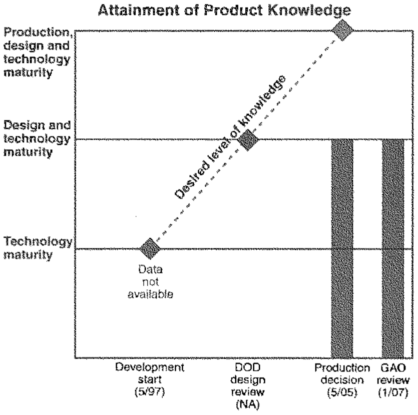
Prime contractor: Raytheon, [illegible]
Program office: Picatinny Arsenal, N.J.
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The Excalibur program has begun early production to support an urgent early fielding requirement in Iraq for more accurate artillery that will reduce collateral damage. According to program officials, this early production run of the Excalibur's first incremental block will involve 500 rounds and fielding has been delayed due to test issues until sometime in the second quarter of fiscal year 2007. They also noted that Excalibur's critical technologies reached full maturity in May 2005, and all of its 790 drawings were completed in July 2005. The Excalibur unitary variant will be developed in three incremental blocks, which will incorporate increased capabilities and accuracy over time. Since development began in 1997, the program has encountered a number of significant changes including four major restructures, reduced initial production quantities and increased unit costs.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



Excalibur Program

Technology Maturity

The Excalibur program is developing its unitary variant in three incremental blocks. All three of the unitary variant's critical technologies reached full technology maturity in May 2005 at the time of the Excalibur's design review. These technologies were the airframe, guidance system, and warhead.

Design Stability and Production Maturity

In May 2005, Excalibur held its design review and entered production. Excalibur's design appears to be stable. At the time of the design review, 750 of 790 design drawings were releasable. All 790 were complete for the first Excalibur block in July 2005. By August 2006, the number of releasable drawings had grown to 943.

We could not assess Excalibur's production maturity. The first block has entered limited production, to support an urgent fielding requirement in Iraq, with limited statistical control data. The program expects to begin collecting statistical control data for all key manufacturing processes starting in fiscal year 2007. Production of the second block is scheduled for fiscal year 2007 and the third block in fiscal year 2010.

Other Program Issues

Excalibur started as a combination of three smaller artillery programs with the intent to extend the range of artillery projectiles with an integrated rocket motor. It is expected to enable three different Army howitzers and the Swedish Archer howitzer to fire further away and defeat threats more quickly while lowering collateral damage and reducing the logistic support burden. The program has encountered a number of changes and issues since development began in 1997, including a decrease in planned quantities, a relocation of the contractor's plant, early limited funding, technical problems, and changes in program requirements. Since 1997, it has been restructured four times including when the program was merged, in 2002, with a joint Swedish/U.S. program known as the Trajectory Correctable Munition. This merger helped the Excalibur deal with design challenges, including issues related to its original folding fin design. Also in 2002, the program was directed to include the development of the Excalibur for the Army's Future Combat System's Non-Line-of-Sight Cannon. The net effect of these changes has been to lengthen the program's schedule and to substantially decrease planned procurement quantities. As a result, program overall cost and unit cost have dramatically increased.

The Excalibur plan currently focuses on developing its unitary version in three incremental blocks. In the first block, the projectile would meet its requirements for accuracy in a non-jammed environment and lethality and would be available for early fielding. In the second block, the projectile would be improved to meet its requirements for accuracy in a jammed environment, extended range, and increased reliability. It would be available for fielding to the Future Combat System's Non-Line-of-Sight Cannon in September 2008 or when the cannon is available. Finally, in the third block, the projectile would be improved to further increase reliability, lower unit costs, and would be available for fielding to all systems in late fiscal year 2011. The other two Excalibur variant blocks—smart and discriminating—would enter system development in fiscal year 2010.

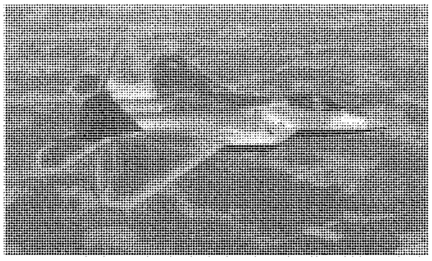
In 2002, an early fielding plan for the unitary version was approved. According to the program office, test issues have now delayed its fielding to Iraq from the 2nd quarter of fiscal year 2006 until the second quarter of fiscal year 2007. Also, first article testing was completed with an intial reliability of over 80 percent. The program office also noted that the initial block will exceed the objective requirements for accuracy and effectiveness. A limited user test is scheduled for the second quarter of fiscal year 2007 prior to fielding in Iraq. Development of the second incremental block is ongoing.

Agency Comments

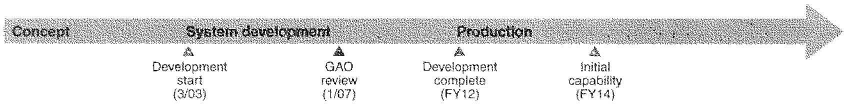
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Army provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

F-22A Modernization and Improvement Program

The Air Force's F-22A, originally planned to be an air superiority fighter, will also have air-to-ground attack capability. It was designed with advanced features, such as stealth characteristics, to make it less detectable to adversaries and capable of high speeds for long ranges. The F-22A's modernization and improvement program is intended to provide enhanced ground attack, information warfare, counterair, and other capabilities and improve the reliability and maintainability of the aircraft.



Source: F-22A System Program Office.



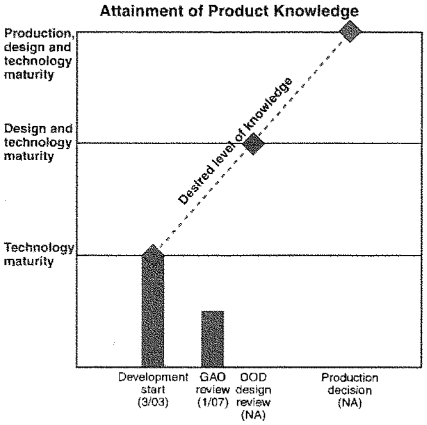
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

In 2003, the F-22A established a modernization program to add enhanced air-to-ground capabilities to aircraft. At that time, all three of the critical technologies needed were mature according to the program office. Since then, however, the program has added three additional critical technologies, all of which are not mature. The F-22A continues to fall short of its required reliability rates. The F-22A program implemented a reliability and maintainability maturation program to increase aircraft reliability rates to required levels. Although the F-22A program has made improvements to systems used to diagnose maintenance problems, these systems are still reporting inaccurate information 20 percent of the time.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



F-22A Program

Technology Maturity

According to program officials, the F-22A modernization effort started development in 2003 with all three of its critical technologies mature. The three identified technologies involved 32-bit stores management system, processing memory, and cryptography. However, since the modernization started the program has added three additional critical technologies. These technologies involve smaller and more powerful radio frequency components, larger bandwidth, and radio frequency low observable features. At the time of our review, none of these technologies had been demonstrated in a realistic environment. Program officials characterized their current stages of development as laboratory settings demonstrating basic performance, technical feasibility, and functionality but not form and fit (size, weight, materials, etc.). Overall technology maturity is consequently lower now than when the modernization effort began. Program officials cited funding instability and new program requirements as contributors to slower progress than planned. However, according to program office officials, the F-22A has a disciplined systems engineering process in place that ensures the technology is developed and matured before integrating the technologies onto the system.

Other Program Issues

In an effort to improve the reliability and maintainability of the F-22A, the Air Force budgeted $102 million in fiscal years 2006 and 2007. The F-22A continues to be below its expected reliability rates. A key reliability requirement for the F-22A is a 3-hour mean time between maintenance, defined as the number of operating hours divided by the number of maintenance actions. This is required by the time it reaches 100,000 operational flying hours, projected to be reached in 2010. Currently the mean time between maintenance is less than 1 hour, or half of what was expected at the end of system development.

In November 2005, the F-22A completed follow-on operational test and evaluation. The purpose of this test was to evaluate the capability of the F-22A to execute the air-to-ground mission, evaluate deferred initial operational test and evaluation items, and support initial operational capability declaration. The F-22A was evaluated as mission capable to complete some limited air-to-ground missions such as accurate delivery of Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAMs).

The Air Force has identified deficiencies that may impact the F-22A's ability to complete planned operations. For example, problems with the thermal management system have impacted the F-22A's ability to operate in hot weather conditions. The Air Force implemented a modification to correct the thermal management problems in early 2006. The F-22A's diagnostics and health management system continues to report some inaccurate data. Although the technical order data fault isolation accuracy has improved, the maintenance jobs created for corrective maintenance actions to return an aircraft to flyable status are still reporting inaccuracies around 20 percent of the time.

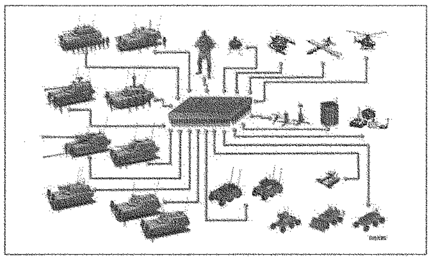
The Air Force identified structural cracks in two sections of the aircraft during fatigue testing that resulted in unplanned modifications to the F-22A. Fatigue testing identified cracks in the aircraft's aft boom where the horizontal tail attaches to the fuselage. The Air Force is planning modifications to strengthen the structure to get the 8,000-hour service life. These modifications are being implemented under the Structural Retrofit Program (SRP). The Air Force estimates the cost to modify 78 F-22As will be approximately $115 million. The modifications to correct this problem will not be fully implemented until 2010. The second structural problem involved cracking in "titanium casting" materials near the engine. Program officials stated that the problem with this titanium was a defect in the material from the subcontractor. The cost to correct this problem is not included in the SRP. The Air Force did not provide information on the cost to correct this problem.

Agency Comments

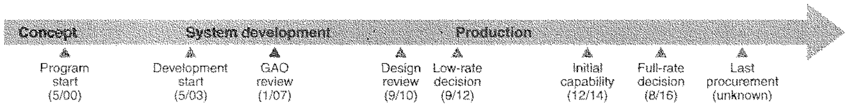
The Air Force provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Future Combat Systems (FCS)

The FCS program will equip the Army's new transformational modular combat brigades and consists of an integrated family of advanced, networked combat and sustainment systems; unmanned ground and air vehicles; and unattended sensors and munitions. Within a system-of-systems architecture, FCS features 18 major systems and other enabling systems along with an overarching network for information superiority and survivability. This assessment focuses on the full FCS program.



Source: Program Manager, Future Combat Systems (BCT).


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (5/00)
Development start (5/03)
GAO review (1/07)
Design review (9/10)
Low-rate decision (9/12)
Initial capability (12/14)
Full-rate decision (8/16)
Last procurement (unknown)

Program Essentials

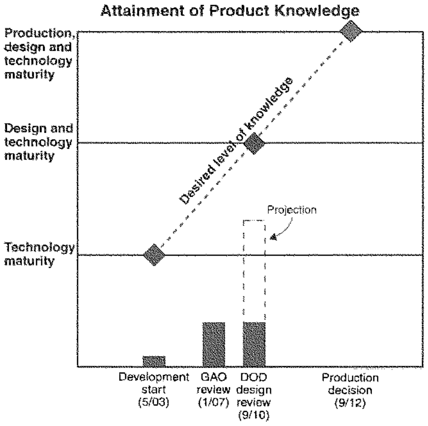
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The FCS program has made progress maturing critical technologies, but only 1 of the FCS' 46 critical technologies is fully mature. Technology maturation will continue throughout development, with an associated risk of cost growth and schedule delays. The Army does not expect to complete the definition of FCS' requirements until at least 2008. As FCS requirements continue to evolve, the Army anticipates making additional trade-offs. For example, a recent trade-off resulted in increased ballistic protection levels for manned ground vehicles but at an increased design weight. The Army anticipates that a high percentage of design drawings will be completed by the design review but that will not take place until 2010. FCS cost estimates have increased significantly as the Army has gained more product knowledge.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



FCS Program

Technology Maturity

The FCS program has made progress maturing critical technologies in the last year, yet it still has not demonstrated the level of knowledge expected of a program entering development. Only 1 of the FCS' 46 critical technologies is fully mature. The program office provided its own updated critical technology assessment, which showed that 36 of 46 technologies are nearing full maturity. An independent assessment of FCS' critical technologies is expected before the preliminary design review in 2008.

The FCS program is not following the best practice standard of having mature technologies prior to starting system development. The program employs integration phases to facilitate incremental introduction of technologies into the FCS system of systems, and to allow for capability augmentation over time. The Army's approach, however, will allow technologies to be included in the integration phases before they approach full maturity. FCS officials insist fully matured technologies are not necessary until after the design readiness review in 2011, which is contrary to best practices and the intent of DOD acquisition policy.

The program has made progress defining FCS requirements, but the process may not be complete until the preliminary design review in 2008. In August 2006, the program documented the desired functional characteristics of FCS systems and the criteria for achieving those characteristics. Although a notable accomplishment, this event should have occurred before the start of development 4 years ago. Furthermore, if technologies do not mature as planned, Army officials say that they may trade off FCS capabilities. As the requirements process has proceeded, the Army has made key trade-offs, including one that increased the ballistic protection levels of the manned ground vehicles (to meet expected threats) and resulted in an increased design weight. The requirements definition process will continue at least until the preliminary design review in 2008 when the Army is expected to confirm the technical feasibility and affordability of the FCS system-level requirements.

Design Stability

The Army expects to conduct the preliminary design review in 2008—much later than recommended by best practices. However, it may be the point at which the FCS program finally approaches a match between requirements and resources. Beyond that, the FCS acquisition strategy includes a very aggressive schedule, with critical design review in 2010 and a Milestone C decision in 2012. Although it is early in the design process, the Army expects to release 95 percent of FCS's design drawings by 2010. Further, testing of the entire FCS concept will not occur until 2012, or just prior to an initial production decision, illustrating the late accumulation of key knowledge.

Other Program Issues

Program office estimates show that the FCS program's costs have increased substantially since the program began. The increases were primarily attributed to increased program scope and an extension of the development and procurement phases. Also, current cost estimates are built with greater program knowledge and are therefore more realistic and accurate. However, the most recent Army cost estimate does not yet reflect some recent requirements changes that increased the number and type of systems to be developed and procured. Further, recent independent cost estimates point out several major risk areas in the Army cost estimates. Although the program is working to reduce unit costs, those desired savings may not be realized until much later in the program, if at all.

Agency Comments

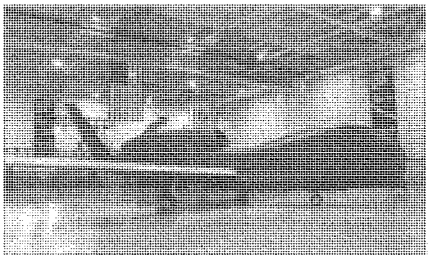
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the FCS program manager stated that this assessment does not give the Army credit for the technical progress shown during recent demonstrations and experiments.

GAO Comments

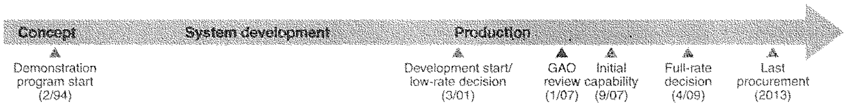
While this assessment does not specifically focus on such demonstrations, they would be reflected to some extent in the Army's own technology assessments. Also, while some progress is being made on individual FCS systems, that progress is not consistent across the family of FCS systems and the information network.

Global Hawk Unmanned Aircraft System

The Air Force's Global Hawk system is a high altitude, long-endurance unmanned aircraft with integrated sensors and ground stations providing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities. After a successful technology demonstration, the system entered development and limited production in March 2001. The acquisition program has been restructured several times. The current plan acquires 7 aircraft similar to the original demonstrators (the RQ-4A) and 47 of a larger and more capable model (the RQ-4B).



Source: Northrop Grumman Corporation.


Concept
System development
Production
Demonstration program start (2/94)
Development start/ low-rate decision (3/01)
GAO review (1/07)
Initial capability (9/07)
Full-rate decision (4/09)
Last procurement (2013)

Program Essentials

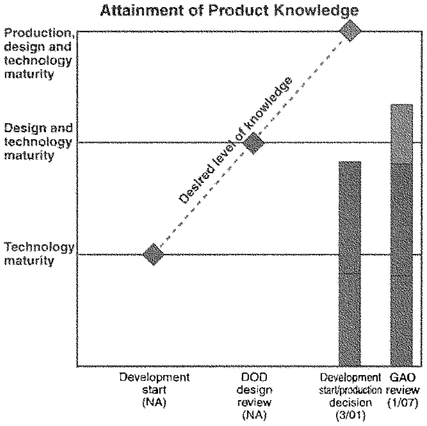
Prime contractor: Northrop Grumman Corporation
Program office: Dayton, Ohio
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

RQ-4A production is complete and two deployed in 2006 to support military operations. RQ-4B is in production with key technologies mostly mature. Representative prototypes of the two sensors driving the requirement for the larger aircraft are in flight test. Airframe design is now stable, but differences between the two models were much more extensive and complex than anticipated; these differences and ongoing support of military operations resulted in extended development times, frequent engineering changes, and significant cost increases. Statistical process controls are being implemented for some manufacturing processes, but delayed testing constrain efforts to mature processes. Dates for integrating and testing new technologies and for achieving initial operational capability have been delayed about 2 years. DOD is rebaselining the program with a substantial increase in cost.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



Global Hawk Program

Technology Maturity

Critical technologies on the RQ-4B have made good progress during the last year with all 10 technologies mature or nearing maturity. This includes the advanced signals intelligence and improved radar sensors, the two key capabilities that drove the decision to develop and acquire the larger aircraft. Representative prototypes of both sensors are in flight tests.

Design Stability

The RQ-4B basic airframe design is now stable with 100 percent of engineering drawings released. During the first year of production, however, frequent and substantive engineering changes increased development and airframe costs and delayed delivery and testing schedules. Differences between the two aircraft models were much more extensive and complex than anticipated.

Production Maturity

The contractor has completed RQ-4A production. Four aircraft have been officially accepted into the operational inventory and three will be delivered in 2007. Completing the RQ-4A operational assessment has been delayed about 2 1/2 years and performance problems were identified in communications, imagery processing, and engines. Officials reported that the deficiencies have been addressed and the assessment will be completed by April 2007.

The first RQ-4B aircraft completed production in August 2006 and will soon start develomental flight testing. Another 11 are on order through the fiscal year 2006 buy. Statistical process controls are being implemented for some manufacturing processes. Officials have identified critical processes and started to collect data for demonstrating capability to meet cost, schedule, and quality targets. Other performance indicators such as defects and rework rates are also used to monitor quality.

Continuing delays in flight and operational tests may affect efforts to mature production processes. Performance and flight issues identified during tests could result in design changes, revised production processes, and rework. Completing operational tests to verify the basic RQ-4B design works as intended have been delayed more than 2 years to February 2009. By that time, the Air Force plans to have bought about one-half the entire fleet. Schedules for integrating, testing, and fielding the new advanced sensors have also been delayed, raising risks that these capabilities may not meet the warfighter's performance and time requirements.

Other Program Issues

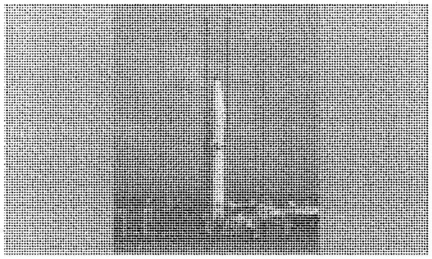
We have previously reported significant cost, schedule, and performance problems for the Global Hawk program. Soon after its March 2001 start, DOD restructured the program from a low-risk incremental approach to a high-risk, highly concurrent strategy to develop and acquire the larger RQ-4B aircraft with advanced, but immature, technologies on a much accelerated production schedule. Since then, the development time has been extended another 3 years with a substantial contract cost overrun, production costs have increased, and software and component parts deliveries have slipped as have the schedules for many critical milestones and testing dates. The Air Force reported breaches of Nunn-McCurdy unit cost thresholds (10 U.S.C. 2433) and DOD had to certify the need for the program to Congress and establish improved cost controls. Due to the unit cost and schedule breaches, the Global Hawk program is being rebaselined for the fourth time since the March 2001 start. The revised average unit procurement cost estimate is 56.5 percent higher than the 2002 approved baseline.

Agency Comments

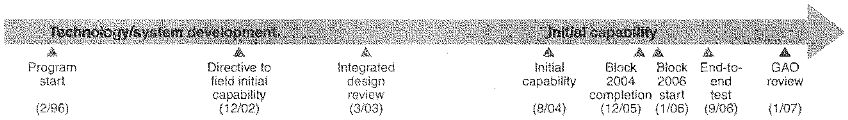
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Air Force stated that the Global Hawk program is stronger today than it was last year. As noted above, technology, design, and production have progressed at the same time management, technical and risk management processes have improved. RQ-4A systems entered Global War on Terror operations providing warfighters with over 83,500 intelligence images, while other aircraft are currently being deployed to the user. The basic RQ-4B aircraft has completed development, entered production, and started testing. The advanced payload developers moved into early component testing, which is an important risk reduction milestone for integration. The program continues to focus on military operations and conducting comprehensive testing as that capability moves into production and deployment. Program challenges include software production, advanced sensors payload integration, and sustainment normalization.

Ground-Based Midcourse Defense (GMD)

MDA's GMD element is being developed incrementally to defend the United States against long-range ballistic missile attacks. Block 2006 provides a limited defensive capability and consists of a collection of radars and interceptors, which are integrated by a central control system that formulates battle plans and directs the operation of GMD components. We assessed the maturity of all technologies critical to the Block 2006 GMD element, but we assessed design and production maturity for the interceptors only.



Source: Department of Defense.



Technology/system development
Initial capability
Program start (2/96)
Directive to field initial capability (12/02)
Integrated design review (3/03)
Initial capability (8/04)
Block 2004 completion (12/05)
Block 2006 start (1/06)
End-to-end test (9/06)
GAO review (1/07)

Program Essentials

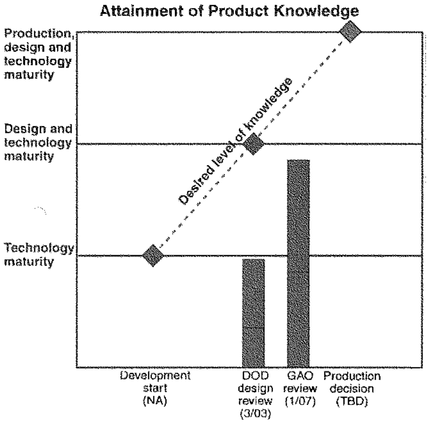
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

Even though only 9 of GMD's 13 critical technologies are fully mature, MDA released all hardware drawings to manufacturing and expected to have 14 interceptors available for operational use by December 2006. Ongoing efforts to mature remaining technologies, along with concurrent testing and fielding efforts may lead to additional design changes. Although MDA is producing hardware for operational use, it has not made a formal production decision. Additionally, we could not assess the stability of the production processes because the program is not collecting statistical data for them. As reported in our last assesment, we expect that the prime contract could overrun its target cost by $1.5 billion. According to program officials, the primary cost drivers are challenges with the EKV, testing, redesign of the BV+ booster, and maintenance and repair on the SBX platform.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



GMD Program

Technology Maturity

Program officials assessed 9 out of 13 critical technologies as mature. The 4 remaining technologies have not been demonstrated in a realistic environment; therefore they do not meet the criteria for a full level of maturity. Mature technologies include the fire control software, the Block 2004 exoatmospheric kill vehicle (EKV) infrared seeker; EKV discrimination; the Orbital Sciences Corporation booster; the Cobra Dane radar; the Beale radar; the sea-based X-band radar, the guidance, navigation, and control subsystems, and the in-flight interceptor communications system. The remaining technologies, which are nearing maturity, are the Block 2006 version of the upgraded infrared seeker and onboard discrimination for the EKV units, and the BV+ booster, including its guidance, navigation, and control subsystem. These remaining technologies are due to be initially fielded in 2008.

Design Stability

The design of the Block 2006 ground-based interceptor appears stable with 100 percent of its drawings released to manufacturing. However, program officials acknowledge that changes to the interceptor's design and drawings may be necessary because the program is developing the interceptor in parallel with testing, fielding, and operations.

Production Maturity

Officials do not plan to make an official production decision as the program will evolve and mature interceptors through block capability enhancements as they are fielded for limited defensive operations. We could not assess the maturity of the production processes for these interceptors because the program is not collecting statistical control data. According to program officials, data are not tracked because current and projected quantities of GMD component hardware are low. Instead, the GMD program measures production capability and maturity with a monthly evaluation process called a manufacturing capability assessment that assesses critical manufacturing indicators for readiness and execution.

MDA had 10 interceptors ready for alert by December 2005 and expected to emplace 6 more by the end of December 2006 for a total of 16. However, at the time of our assessment, program officials estimated that only 14 interceptors would be fielded by that time. By the end of Block 2006, in December 2007, MDA plans to have 24 interceptors fielded. Fielding delays have occurred as the contractor increased the robustness of its quality assurance program. All interceptors fielded to date use the Orbital Science Corporation's OBV booster. The BV+ booster is continuing to mature and is expected to be ready for flight testing in fiscal year 2008.

Other Program Issues

The GMD test program was restructured in 2005 because of flight test failures and quality control problems. GMD successfully completed two flight tests utilizing operational interceptors in fiscal year 2006. Flight test 2 was an end-to-end test of one engagement scenario resulting in a target intercept. Flight test 3, scheduled for December 2006, planned to have a target intercept as an objective, but the test has been delayed until at least the third quarter of fiscal year 2007. Accordingly, further tests are needed before models and simulations that estimate GMD's performance can be relied upon.

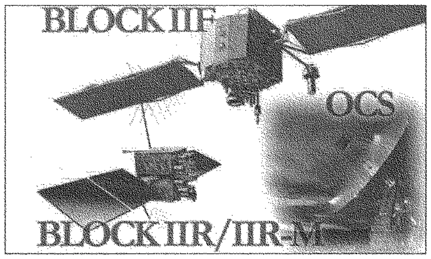
As reported in our last assessment, we estimate that at the contract's completion the GMD prime contractor, Boeing, could experience a cost overrun of approximately $1.5 billion. Program officials, however, believe that this cost data is distorted because the work plan that the contractor is being measured against does not reflect ongoing work. The program is in the process of implementing a new plan that will reflect new quality control processes and the latest flight test plan. Since our last assessment, GMD's planned budget through fiscal year 2009 has increased by $860 million (2.9 percent).

Agency Comments

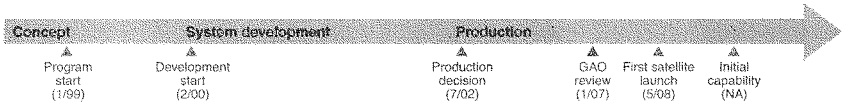
MDA provided technical comments, which were incoporated as appropriate.

Navstar Global Positioning System (GPS) II Modernized Space/OCS

GPS is an Air Force-led joint program with the Army, Navy, Department of Transportation, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, United Kingdom, and Australia. This space-based radio-positioning system nominally consists of a 24-satellite constellation providing navigation and timing data to military and civilian users worldwide. In 2000, Congress approved the modernization of Block IIR and Block IIF satellites. In addition to satellites, GPS includes a control system and receiver units. We focused our review on the Block IIF.


BLOCK IIF
OCS
BLOCK IIR/IIR-M

Source: Navstar GPS Joint Program Office, Space and Missile Systems Center.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (1/99)
Development start (2/00)
Production decision (7/02)
GAO review (1/07)
First satellite launch (5/08)
Initial capability (NA)

Program Essentials

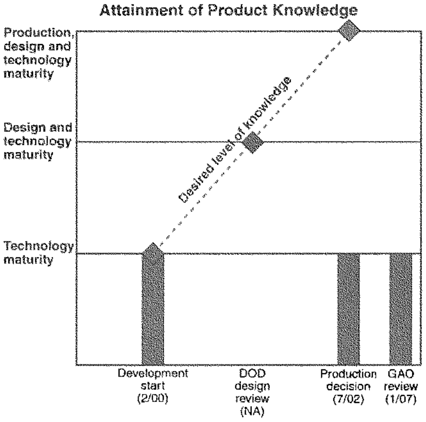
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	TBD	TBD	TBD
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	TBD	TBD	TBD

[illegible]

Since our assessment of the GPS Block IIF effort last year, significant cost increases and schedule delays have occurred. The program has requested an additional $151 million to cover testing and production costs, did not award the contractor $21.4 million in award fees, and incurred an estimated 17-month delay in the launch of the first IIF satellite. According to the program office, the Block IIF technologies are mature. Since the start of the GPS program in 1973, GPS satellites have been modernized in blocks with the newer blocks providing additional capabilities. The contractor was not required to provide data on design drawings so design stability could not be assessed. Since these satellites are not mass-produced, statistical process control techniques are not used to monitor production.



GPS Block II Modernization Program

Technology Maturity

The only critical technology on the Block IIF satellites is the space-qualified atomic frequency standards and it is considered mature.

Design Stability

We could not assess design stability because the Block IIF contract does not require that design drawings be delivered to the program. Last year design of the software for the Application Specific Integrated Circuit microcircuit chips and delays in security clearances resulted in $46 million in cost overruns.

Production Maturity

We could not assess production maturity because the contractor does not collect statistical process control data. The program office had relied on earned value management reports to monitor the contractor's production efforts, but discovered this past year that the contractor's earned value management reporting system was not accurately reporting cost and schedule performance data. According to program officials, they have addressed these reporting deficiencies and have requested separate audits to identify the root causes of the problems. In addition, the program office has increased its personnel at the contractor's facility to observe operations and to verify that corrective measures are being taken to address deficiencies.

Other Program Issues

The program office estimates that the planned launch of the first IIF satellite will be delayed 17 months from January 2007 to May 2008 due to schedule and testing delays. This past year, the contractor encountered a series of delays with the delivery of hardware components from subcontractors as well as the development of the software that runs equipment used to test payload and bus components. The concurrent development and production of the first three IIF satellites has led to significant cost increases and schedule delays. As a result, the program office has requested approximately $151 million in funds to be reprogrammed this year. This amount is based on the contractor's cost estimate to complete development and production of the first three satellites.

In June 2006 the program reported that 40 modernized GPS satellites (a combination of IIR, IIR-M and IIF satellites) would be procured. However, the program office now plans to procure 7 fewer satellites—meaning 12 IIF satellites are to be procured instead of 19. In order to sustain the GPS constellation, 12 IIF satellites are needed until the first GPS III satellite is launched in fiscal year 2013. If approved, the reduced number of IIF satellites and a possible increase in program funding will increase unit cost per satellite, potentially breaching Nunn-McCurdy thresholds.

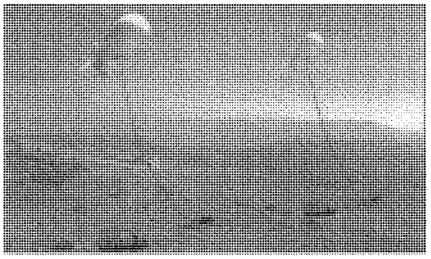
The program office did not award the contractor $21.4 million in 2006 available award fees due to cost overruns and schedule delays. According to program officials, the $21.4 million will be used to cover a portion of the cost overruns. The procurement of the IIF satellites and control system used a contracting approach that gave the contractor full responsibility for the life cycle of the program and allowed parallel development and production efforts which resulted in cost overruns and schedule delays.

Agency Comments

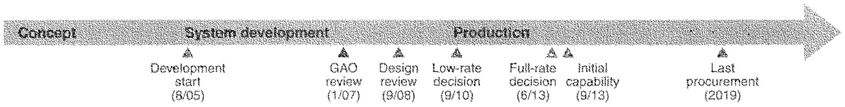
The Air Force generally concurred with this assessment and provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Joint Land Attack Cruise Missile Defense Elevated Netted Sensor System

The Army's JLENS is designed to provide over-the-horizon detection and tracking of land attack cruise missiles and other targets. The Army is developing JLENS in two spirals. Spiral 1 is completed and served as a testbed to demonstrate initial capability. Spiral 2 will utilize two aerostats with advanced sensors for surveillance and tracking as well as mobile mooring stations, communication payloads, and processing stations. JLENS provides surveillance and engagement support to other systems, such as PAC-3 and MEADS. We assessed Spiral 2.



Source: Cruise Missile Defense Systems Project Office, JLENS Product Office.


Concept
System development
Production
Development start (8/05)
GAO review (1/07)
Design review (9/08)
Low-rate decision (9/10)
Full-rate decision (6/13)
Initial capability (9/13)
Last procurement (2019)

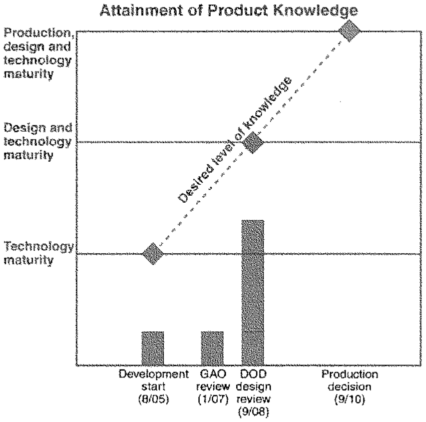
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The program began development in August 2005 with only one of its five critical technologies mature. Currently, of the four remaining technologies, one is near full maturity and the others are not expected to be mature until the production decision in September 2010. The size of the aerostat was increased to accommodate the weight load for detection and tracking equipment requirements. Although the program plans to release 90 percent of the engineering drawings by the design review in September 2008, the program faces risk of redesign until technologies demonstrate full maturity and weight issues are resolved. Furthermore, the program recently definitized its development contract in December 2006 after the program ordered a change to the contract in October 2005.



JLENS Program

Technology Maturity

JLENS entered system development in August 2005 with only one of its five critical technologies mature. The communications payload technology consisting of radios and fiber optic equipment is mature and the processing station technology—which serves as the JLENS operations center—is approaching full maturity. Both sensors—the fire control radar (formerly the precision track illumination radar) and the surveillance radar along with the platform—have not yet reached maturity. The program expects to integrate and demonstrate these technologies by the production decision in 2010.

The JLENS platform consists of the aerostat, mobile mooring station, power and fiber optic data transfer tethers, and ground support equipment. The aerostat, a buoyant aircraft used for payload attachment and support, has been increased in size from 71 meters to 74 meters—the length necessary to lift 7,000 pounds of total payload weight to an altitude that will allow the radar to meet detection and tracking requirements. The primary payload weight comes from the radar. However, additional fiber optic data cables to meet information assurance requirements increased the weight by 300 pounds. This is largely due, according to program officials, to the incorporation of the Navy's Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC) into the system's design. CEC is a system that fuses high quality radar tracking data to create a single, common air picture. The addition of CEC adds a high-powered antenna to the aerostat and increases the number of aerostat fiber optic cables from 3 to 9 to accommodate the CEC and to provide spare cables for alternate JLENS payloads.

JLENS sensors support the system's primary mission to acquire, track, classify, and discriminate targets. According to the project office, many of the JLENS sensor technologies have legacy components. A majority of the surveillance radar components have been tested in an environment similar to the expected JLENS deployment environment and many of the fire control radar components have prototypes. However, these technologies will require physical modification and demonstration of subcomponents for use in the JLENS operational environment. Tests to characterize and integrate fire control radar and surveillance radar components are currently being conducted in the program's system integration laboratory.

Design Stability

The program estimates that 90 percent of its 6,230 drawings will be released by the design review in September 2008. However, until the maturity of the JLENS's critical technologies has been demonstrated the potential for design changes remains.

Other Program Issues

The JLENS product office ordered a change to the contract in October 2005. According to program officials, upon review of the proposal from the contractor, the government discovered that the contractor did not meet the JLENS funding profile provided with the change order. Furthermore, a review of the proposal found that several requirements had not been addressed in revisions that took place after August 2005—when the program entered product development. The contractor submitted a revised proposal in July 2006. According to program officials, negotiations and definitization of the contract that met the program's funding profile and requirements were completed in December 2006.

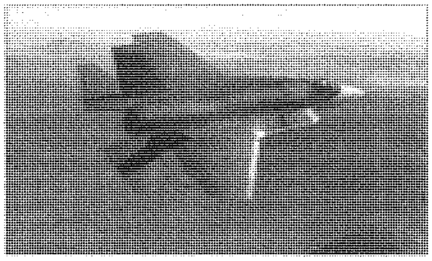
The JLENS program intends to hand over the task of making JLENS interoperable with other systems to an integrated air and missile defense (IAMD) program office. The IAMD program office will develop a standard set of interfaces between sensors such as JLENS and other sensors, weapons and battle management, command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence capabilities. According to program officials, the impact of IAMD requirements on the JLENS schedule are not currently known.

Agency Comments

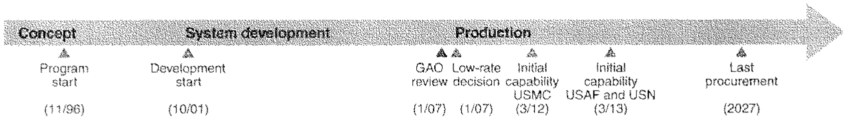
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Army provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Joint Strike Fighter (JSF)

The JSF program goals are to develop and field a family of stealthy, strike fighter aircraft for the Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and U.S. allies, with maximum commonality to minimize costs. The carrier-suitable version will complement the Navy's F/A-18 E/F. The conventional takeoff and landing version will primarily be an air-to-ground replacement for the Air Force's F-16 and the A-10 aircraft, and will complement the F-22A. The short takeoff and vertical landing version will replace the Marine Corps' F/A-18 and AV-8B aircraft.



Source: JSF Program Office.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (11/96)
Development start (10/01)
GAO review (1/07)
Low-rate decision (1/07)
Initial capability USMC (3/12)
Initial capability USAF and USN (3/13)
Last procurement (2027)

Program Essentials

Prime contractor: Lockheed Martin

Program Office: Arlington, Va.

Funding needed to complete:

R&D: [illegible]

Procurement: [illegible]

Total funding: [illegible]

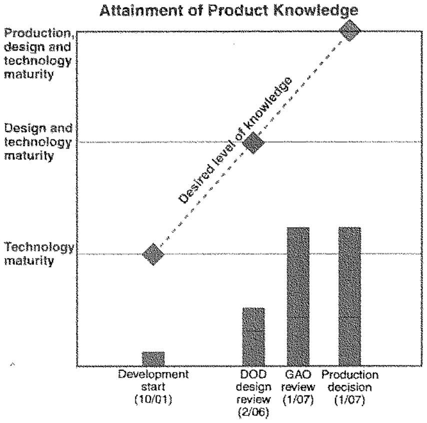
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of 10/2001	Latest 12/2005	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

JSF program data indicates that two of the system's eight critical technologies are now mature, four are approaching maturity but two are immature despite being past the design review. Design stability was not reached by the design review, the two variants had released fewer drawings than suggested by best practices and the program had not demonstrated the successful integration of the system. The program plans to enter production in 2007 with little demonstrated knowledge about performance and producibility. All three variants will not be in flight testing until 2 years after production begins with a fully integrated aircraft in flight testing 4 years after it begins. DOD organizations have raised concerns with the program highlighting cost, schedule, and performance risks.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



JSF Program

Technology Maturity

In 2001, the JSF entered development without its eight critical technologies being mature. Two are now mature, four are approaching maturity but two (mission systems integration and prognostics and health maintenance) are immature despite being past the design review.

Design Stability

As of October 2006, JSF officials report that 91 percent of the short takeoff and vertical landing variant and 46 percent of the conventional variant drawings have been released. At the February 2006 design review, the program reported that 46 and 3 percent of the drawings had been released respectively, less than the best practices standard. Also, the program had not prototyped the expected designs or demonstrated the successful integration of the system. The program projects it will have released 47 percent of the carrier variant drawings at its design review in 2007. Issues with stabilizing the design have impacted the delivery of the first production representative aircraft by about 2 ½ years.

Production Maturity

The program is collecting information on the maturity of manufacturing processes. However, because the design has not been proven to work, the potential for design changes during flight testing weakens efforts to mature processes. A change in design can also require a change in the manufacturing processes—a costly proposition once production begins. The development uncertainties still facing the program are reflected in DOD's plans to use cost reimbursement contracts for initial production orders. The 7-year flight test program began in late 2006 and a fully integrated variant is scheduled to fly in 2011 leaving a significant time period where changes could occur. By 2011, DOD expects to have invested more than $20 billion in production aircraft. Further, manufacturing processes currently planned have not been proven. The first test aircraft (nonproduction representative) encountered inefficiencies requiring 32 percent more manufacturing hours to date than planned. Since entering manufacturing, the aircraft design and the manufacturing processes have changed substantially.

Other Program Issues

Since the program rebaseline in 2004, costs have increased more than $30 billion (then year dollars), delivery of the key development aircraft has slipped as much as 10 months with other development activities slipping as well. The contractor's cost performance has also decreased. Internal DOD organizations have expressed concerns about the program. A February 2006 operational assessment noted risks with the flight test schedule, software development, maintainability and mission effectiveness. DOD cost analyst and contract management officials have expressed concerns that costs to complete the program will be higher than estimates.

Agency Comments

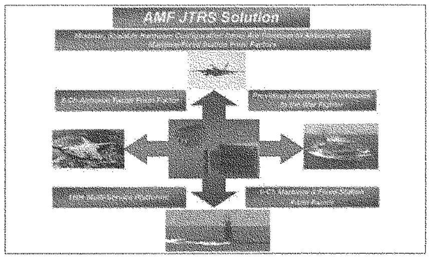
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the JSF program office said that for the third year, GAO ignores F-35 successes, does not measure against the 2004 replan, and misapplies commercial best practices. F-35 is more mature than any comparable program at a similar development point. Advanced virtual prototyping tools ensure structure, avionics and propulsion fit together before production. The first test aircraft is complete with unprecedented assembly fit and quality, problem-free power-on, rapid execution of engine and secondary-power tests and actual weight within 1 percent of predictions. Ten development aircraft are now in manufacturing. Lab investment is substantially larger and earlier than in legacy programs promoting early risk burndown. The acquisition strategy provides the best balance of cost, schedule and risk via sequential development of variants and spiral blocks of mission capabilities. GAO's approach would result in multibillion-dollar cost increases and significant legacy fleet impact.

GAO Comments

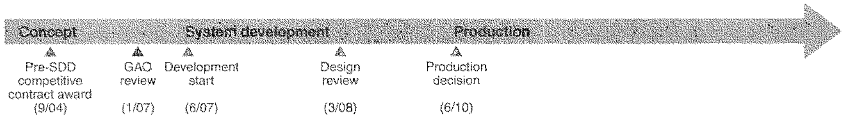
In our evaluation we did consider all pertinent information including JSF progress and program office technical comments on this assessment and found the JSF program consistently proceeding through critical junctures with knowledge gaps that expose the program to significant risks. Like past programs that have followed this approach, the consequences have been predictable as the JSF has continually missed its cost and schedule targets—even after the 2004 replan. If the program were to follow a knowledge-based approach it would lower risks allowing for more realistic cost and schedule estimates.

Joint Tactical Radio System Airborne, Maritime, Fixed-Station (JTRS AMF)

The JTRS program is developing software-defined radios that will interoperate with existing radios and also increase communications and networking capabilities. A Joint Program Executive Office provides a central acquisition authority and balances acquisition actions across the services. Program/product offices are developing radio hardware and software for users with similar requirements. The AMF program will develop radios that will be integrated into nearly 100 different types of aircraft, ships, and fixed stations for all the services.



Source: JTRS AMF Program Office.



Pre-SDD competitive contract award (9/04)
GAO review (1/07)
Development start (6/07)
Design review (3/08)
Production decision (6/10)

Program Essentials
Prime contractor: TBD
Program office: Hanscom AFB, Mass.
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

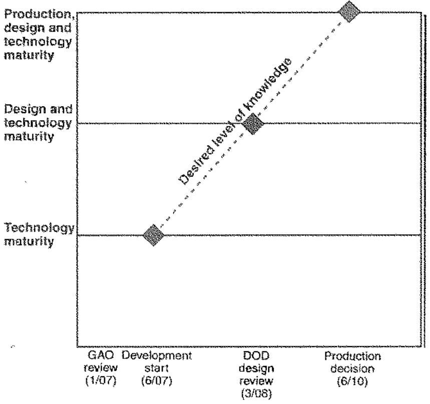
Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	N/A	[illegible]	N/A
Procurement cost	N/A	[illegible]	N/A
Total program cost	N/A	[illegible]	N/A
Program unit cost	N/A	TBD	N/A
Total quantities	N/A	[illegible]	N/A
Acquisition cycle time (months)	N/A	N/A	N/A

[illegible]

JTRS AMF has taken steps to develop knowledge prior to the start of system development. As part of the program's acquisition strategy, a presystem development phase started in September 2004 with the award of competitive system design contracts to two industry teams led by Boeing and Lockheed Martin. Through this acquisition strategy, program officials expect competitive designs that will help mitigate costs and other risks. While challenges remain, program officials noted that significant progress has been made by both industry teams in demonstrating technology and design maturity. The program is scheduled to enter system development in June 2007. The JTRS AMF system development program will be designed to introduce capabilities incrementally, consistent with the approved 2006 restructuring of the overall JTRS acquisition program.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



JTRS AMF Program

Technology Maturity

To help mitigate technical risks and address key integration challenges, JTRS AMF awarded competitive predevelopment contracts to two industry teams led by Boeing and Lockheed Martin. In June 2007, after a full and open competition, a contracting team will be selected for the JTRS AMF system development. The program office will use an Army organization to prepare an independent Technology Readiness Assessment before entry into the system development and demonstration acquisition phase. The identification of critical technologies was completed by Boeing and Lockheed Martin in early 2006, and validated by the independent assessment team through the design work leading up to the preliminary design reviews. Both companies submitted self-assessment reports of their design's critical technologies to the program office and the independent assessment team. The independent assessment of the maturity of the program's critical technologies was completed by the independent assessment team in October 2006, and has been submitted to the Joint Program Executive Officer for review and completion of the Technology Readiness Assessment prior to the program Milestone B decision, scheduled for June 2007.

Both teams have demonstrated progress in developing key functions of the radio through in-lab and field demonstrations with representative hardware and software components of their designs. Preliminary design reviews were held in August 2005 for both teams, and program officials indicated that both preliminary designs met the National Security Agency's information assurance requirements for that stage of development. As the JTRS program was being restructured in late 2005 and early 2006, the JTRS AMF contracts were extended to continue risk reduction and design maturity work. These extensions to the contracts were completed in October 2006, with each company presenting its detailed preliminary designs during 3-weeks of reviews. These reviews focused on the design details necessary to meet the JTRS AMF Increment 1 requirements. Although the program is likely to face challenges as it proceeds through systems development and demonstration, program officials are confident that the program can enter the system development and demonstration phase in June 2007 with sufficiently mature technologies. This assurance is based on the independent technology maturity assessment results, the technical exchanges and design reviews held with the contractors, along with rigorous risk reduction and demonstration activities done by both the contractors and program office during the 2-year pre-system development and demonstration contracts.

Other Program Issues

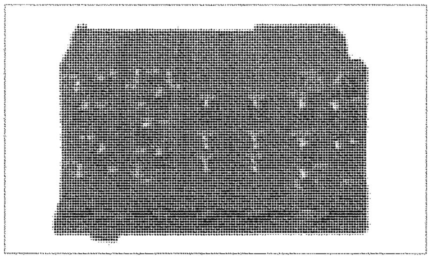
The restructuring of the JTRS program under the Joint Program Executive Office is in place and its emphasis on an incremental approach will defer costly nontransformational requirements to later increments. The first increment has been defined and prioritizes development of high-priority networking waveforms and achieving interoperability with key legacy waveforms. For JTRS AMF, Increment 1 will include the development of a small radio variant for airborne platforms that will support the Wideband Networking Waveform, the Soldier Radio Waveform, the NATO Link 16/Tactical Digital Information Link J (TADIL-J) waveform, and the Mobile User Objective System (MUOS) waveform. Increment 1 will also include the development of a large radio variant for ships and fixed stations that will support MUOS and legacy UHF satellite communications (SATCOM).

Agency Comments

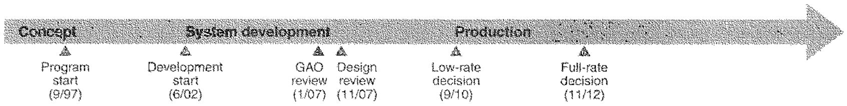
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the JTRS Joint Program Executive Office provided technical comments which were incorporated as appropriate.

Joint Tactical Radio System Ground Mobile Radio (JTRS GMR)

The JTRS program is developing software-defined radios that will interoperate with select radios and also increase communications and networking capabilities. A Joint Program Executive Office provides a central acquisition authority and balances acquisition actions across the services, while product offices are developing radio hardware and software for users with similar requirements. The JTRS Ground Mobile Radio (formerly Cluster 1) product office, within the JTRS Ground Domain program office, is developing radios for ground vehicles.



Source: PdM Ground Mobile Radio.



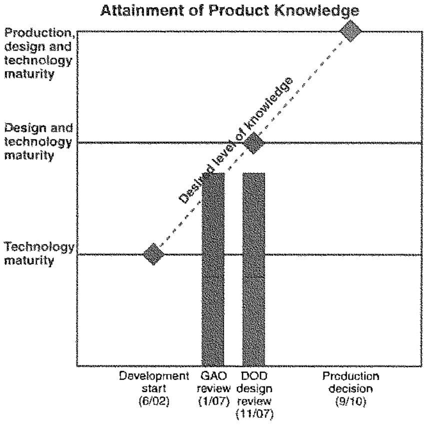
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The JTRS GMR program has recently been restructured due to significant cost and schedule problems that came to light in late 2004. Since development began in 2002, the program has struggled to mature and integrate key technologies and has been forced to make design changes. The program restructuring appears to put the program in a better position to succeed by emphasizing an incremental, more moderate risk approach to developing capabilities. The program reported that all but one of JTRS GMR's critical technologies are mature or approaching maturity. Nonetheless, several risks remain. The radio has only demonstrated limited networking capabilities and the program continues to reconcile size, weight and power requirements. In addition, the new JTRS joint management structure is new and untested.



JTRS GMR Program

Technology Maturity

The maturity of JTRS GMR critical technologies is questionable. The program reported that 13 of its 20 critical technologies were mature indicating that progress has been made since the program entered system development in 2002 when none of the program's critical technologies were mature. However, this progress is based on a series of contractor demonstrations conducted in spring 2005 that used only partially functioning prototypes. Among other things, the demonstrations did not show extensive Wideband Networking Waveform capabilities. For example, the demonstrated network only linked 4 users, far fewer than the required 250. The Wideband Networking Waveform represents the core of the JTRS networking capability and its integration is the most significant technical challenge to the radio's development, according to program officials. In addition, critical technologies such as the network bridging software are immature. The program expects to demonstrate the maturity of all critical technologies during a System Integration Test in early fiscal year 2010. This test will be conducted in an operational environment using fully functioning prototypes.

Design Stability

The program reported that 83 percent of its design drawings have been released to manufacturing. Although security requirements continue to be a challenge, the current design incorporates the security requirements that include the ability of the GMR system to be used in an open networked environment.

The program—in collaboration with the user community—also continues to reconcile size, weight, and power requirements. The delivery of new power amplifiers that were developed as part of a science and technology program could help address these concerns. Nonetheless, these challenges and the uncertainty of technology maturity raise concern about the program's design stability. The program will undergo a second design review in November 2007.

Other Program Issues

The restructuring appears to put the program in a better position to succeed, by emphasizing an incremental, more moderate risk approach to developing and fielding capabilities. The incremental approach defers the development for some of the more challenging requirements to later increments, allowing more time to mature critical technologies, integrate the components and test the radio system before committing to production. DOD also expects that the establishment of the JTRS Joint Program Executive Office and other management changes will improve oversight and coordination of the JTRS program.

While the restructuring appears to address many of the problems that affected JTRS in the past, the long-term technical challenges discussed previously must be overcome for the program to be successful. In addition, the JPEO is assessing different options to enable network interoperability between JTRS networks and anticipates that development of this effort will start in 2007.

Although the new joint management structure is an improvement over the previous fragmented structure, it is new and untested. Joint development efforts in DOD have often been hampered by an inability to obtain and sustain commitments and support from the military services. Some agency officials also expressed concern whether the services will have the budget capacity to fund integration costs once the radio sets were available for installation.

Agency Comments

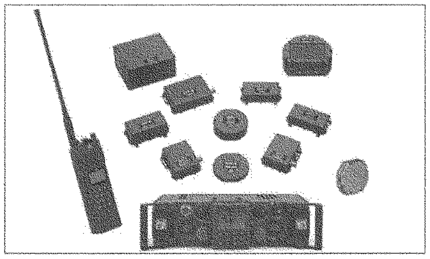
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the JTRS Joint Program Executive Office noted that the baseline information of June 2002—the start of development—should reflect the lower risk "Threshhold" values rather than the higher risk "Objective" values for both cost and schedule to more appropriately provide a medium-risk program comparison between the start of development in 2002 and GAO's assessment period in September 2006. The restructured program is medium risk. The JTRS Joint Program Executive Office also provided technical comments which were incorporated as appropriate.

GAO Comments

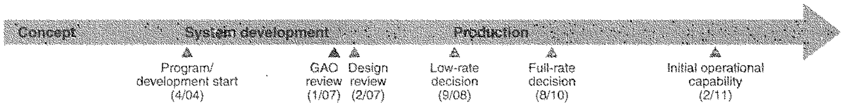
We did not change the baseline cost and schedule information as suggested by the Joint Progarm Executive Office. We assess all programs in this report by their original development baseline.

JTRS Handheld, Manpack, Small Form Fit (JTRS HMS)

The JTRS program is developing software-defined radios that will interoperate with select radios and also increase communications and networking capabilities. A Joint Program Executive Office provides a central acquisition authority and balances acquisition actions across the services, while product offices are developing radio hardware and software for users with similar requirements. The JTRS HMS (formerly Cluster 5) product office, within the JTRS Ground Domain program office, is developing handheld, manpack, and small form radios.



Source: PdM Handheld, Manpack, Small Form Fit.


Concept
System development
Production
Program/ development start (4/04)
GAO review (1/07)
Design review (2/07)
Low-rate decision (9/08)
Full-rate decision (8/10)
Initial operational capability (2/11)

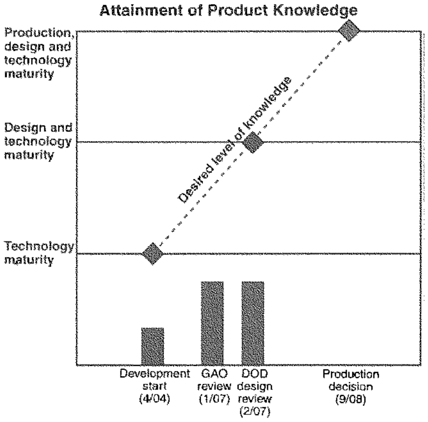
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The JTRS HMS program has recently been restructured, along with the entire JTRS Joint Program Executive Office enterprise. The program restructuring appears to put the program in a better position to succeed by emphasizing an incremental, more moderate risk approach to developing capabilities. The program reports that all of JTRS HMS's critical technologies are mature or appoaching maturity. Nonetheless, several risks remain. Meeting the radios' size, weight, and power requirements continues to be a challenge. In addition, while the key networking waveform has been integrated onto JTRS HMS radios, program officials expect that it will take additional effort to transition the waveform from a static laboratory environment to a realistic operational platform. Solutions enabling multinetwork interoperability are also still being developed.



JTRS HMS Program

Technology Maturity

The maturity of JTRS HMS critical technologies is questionable. The program reported that 3 of its 6 critical technologies were mature indicating that progress has been made since system development began in 2004 when only one of its critical technologies was mature. The remaining critical technologies are approaching maturity. However, in most cases, the reported maturity is not justified because the technologies either were not demonstrated in a realistic environment or they were not demonstrated using an adequately functioning prototype. Nonetheless, the program office believes that the delivery of early prototypes in late October 2006 indicates that significant progress has been made.

The restructuring of the program combined with requirements relief has allowed for the maturing of JTRS HMS critical technologies. The program expects that all 6 of its critical technologies will mature sufficiently to begin low-rate production deliveries of the small form radios by the end of fiscal year 2009 and for the manpack/handheld radios by the end of fiscal year 2010. However, meeting the requirements of the JTRS HMS radios will continue to be a challenge because of their small size, weight, and power constraints. Program officials expect that the requirements relief provided by the restructuring should help to address these issues. In particular, the restructuring reduces the number of JTRS HMS radio variants from 15 to 9. Reducing the number of variants provides relief in the hardware design and platform integration work. In addition, the restructuring reduces the number of waveforms from 19 to 5 required to operate on the various HMS radios, which is expected to reduce power demands, thereby reducing the size and weight demands.

Importantly, JTRS HMS radios will also not be required to operate the Wideband Networking Waveform. The Wideband Networking Waveform provides key networking capabilities to JTRS but carries with it a large power requirement. As an alternative, JTRS HMS radios will operate the Soldier Radio Waveform which is a low-power, short-range networking waveform optimized for radios with severe size, weight, and power constraints such as dismounted soldier radios and small-form radios. The initial version of the Soldier Radio Waveform has been successfully integrated onto early prototypes. While the waveform has demonstrated some functionality, program officials noted that it will take some effort to transition the waveform from a static laboratory environment to a realistic operational platform. In particular, program officials are concerned about the waveform's security architecture and how this may affect integrating it onto a JTRS radio. Given these concerns, the waveform's development schedule may be ambitious. The contract to further develop this waveform was awarded early in fiscal year 2007.

Design Stability

We did not assess the design stability of JTRS HMS because the total number of drawings is not known and there are currently no releasable drawings complete. Design review is scheduled for February 2007.

Other Program Issues

Although the production decision for HMS radios has been delayed for 2 years, the recent restructuring of the JTRS program appears to put the program in a better position to succeed by emphasizing an incremental, more moderate risk approach to developing and fielding capabilities. The success of the first "spin-out" of Future Combat Systems is dependent on the delivery of select JTRS HMS radios that operate the Soldier Radio Waveform.

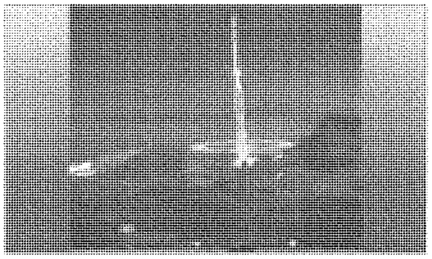
While the restructuring reduces program risk, the long-term technical challenges discussed previously must be overcome for the program to be successfully executed. In addition, the JPEO is assessing different options to enable network interoperability between JTRS networks and anticipates that development of this effort will start in 2007.

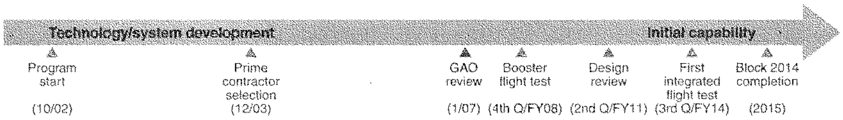
Agency Comments

In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the JTRS Joint Program Executive Office provided technical comments which were incorporated as appropriate.

Kinetic Energy Interceptors (KEI)

MDA's KEI element is a missile defense system designed to destroy medium, intermediate, and intercontinental ballistic missiles during the boost and midcourse phases of flight. Key components include hit-to-kill interceptors, mobile launchers, and fire control and communications units. We assessed the proposed land-based KEI capability, which according to program officials, could be available in 2014.


Source: Kinetic Energy Interceptors Program Office, Northrop Grumman.


Technology/system development
Initial capability
Program start (10/02)
Prime contractor selection (12/03)
GAO review (1/07)
Booster flight test (4th Q/FY08)
Design review (2nd Q/FY11)
First integrated flight test (3rd Q/FY14)
Block 2014 completion (2015)

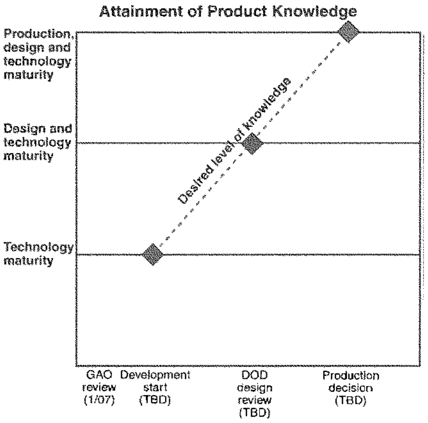
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

KEI's seven critical technologies are at a relatively low level of maturity, with two rated as high risk—the interceptor's booster motors and the algorithm that enables the kill vehicle to identify the threat missile's body from the luminous exhaust plume. During fiscal year 2006, program officials conducted a series of static fire tests and wind tunnel tests in preparation for a 2008 booster flight test. After the booster flight test, MDA will assess KEI's achievements and decide how the program should proceed. If a decision is made to move forward, MDA plans to finalize the design during the second quarter of fiscal year 2011. According to program officials, by that time 4 of the 7 critical technologies will be demonstrated in flight tests, but the other 3 will have only completed ground testing.



KEI Program

Technology Maturity

All seven KEI critical technologies are at a relatively low level of maturity. During fiscal year 2006, program officials conducted several static fire tests and wind tunnel tests in an effort to mature the technologies. Each of the technologies is a part of the element's interceptor—the weapon component of the element consisting of a kill vehicle mounted atop a boost vehicle. Four of the seven technologies are critical to the performance of the boost vehicle, which propels the kill vehicle into space. Boost vehicle technologies include three stages of booster motors, an attitude control system, and a thrust vector control sytem. The remaining three technologies are related to the kill vehicle—its infrared seeker, divert system, and plume-to-hardbody algorithms. Backup technologies exist for all technologies, with the exception of the infrared seeker. However, these technologies are at the same low level of maturity as the critical technologies.

MDA plans to demonstrate three critical technologies—the thrust vector control system, attitude control system, and the three-stage booster motor—in two booster flight tests by the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2011. Other technologies will have been demonstrated in ground tests, such as hardware-in-the-loop tests. The integration of all critical technologies will be demonstrated in an element characterization test early in fiscal year 2013, a sea risk reduction flight test in mid-fiscal year 2013, followed by the first integrated flight test late in fiscal year 2013.

Design Stability

Program officials noted that they expect the design of the demonstration hardware to be the same as the design of the operational hardware. Therefore, integration and manufacturability issues are being addressed in the design of the demonstration hardware. According to program officials, KEI's operational design will be finalized in 2011. KEI officials estimate that KEI's design will incorporate about 7,500 drawings. The officials expect 5,000 of these drawings to be complete when it holds a critical design/production readiness review for the land-based capability in 2011. However, it is too early to make an accurate assessment of KEI's designs because not all of KEI's technologies are mature.

Other Program Issues

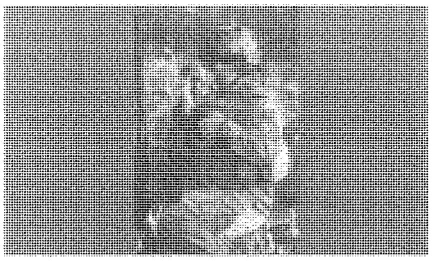
The KEI program is undergoing a rebaseline plan to compensate for funding reductions from fiscal year 2004 through 2006, and the addition of new requirements such as a larger booster, 2-color seeker, and development verification tests. Currently the KEI contract is scheduled to end in January 2012, however funding reductions forced program officials to delay the completion of its land mobile based capabilities—originally planned for Block 2012—to Block 2014. According to program officials, once the re-baseline is complete and negotiations are finished, the KEI contract will extend through June 2015. Additionally, program officials noted that the addition of new requirements, the reductions in funding, and the deferring of activities has increased the overall program cost by $1.5 billion.

Agency Comments

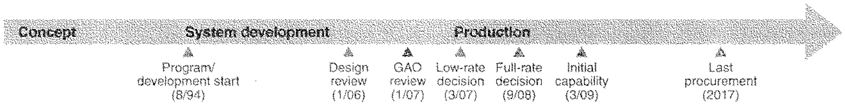
The Program Office provided technical comments to a draft of this assessment, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Land Warrior

The Army's Land Warrior is a modular, integrated, soldier-worn system of systems intended to enhance the lethality, situational awareness, and survivability of dismounted combat and support soldiers. It consists of a wearable computer, a radio, a navigation module for friendly force tracking, a helmet-mounted display to provide a common operational picture, and power. We assessed Land Warrior in support of the Army's Stryker Brigades.



Source: Program Executive Office Soldier.



Program Essentials

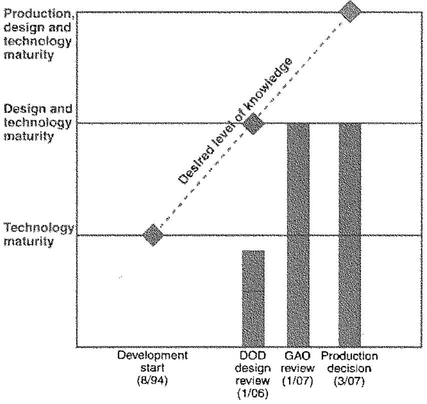
Prime contractor: General Dynamics C4 Systems
Program office: Fort Belvoir, VA
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible] million
Procurement: [illegible] million
Total funding: [illegible] million
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

In 2005, the Army terminated a spiral of Land Warrior—the Dismounted Battle Command System—intended to provide a limited, near-term capability to the current force, and it renewed its focus on the full Land Warrior system. The program office reports that the full system's three critical technologies (power, radio, and navigation module) are mature. In 2006, the program conducted a user representative assessment and a Limited User Test that were to inform the decision-maker regarding Land Warrior's entry into low-rate initial production in March 2007. According to the Army, test results indicate that Land Warrior is generally effective, suitable, and survivable. However, due to significant Army-wide resource challenges, the Army has decided to not pursue further development and production of Land Warrior.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



Land Warrior Program

Technology Maturity

The program office reports that Land Warrior's three critical technologies—a navigation module, radio, and power (rechargeable batteries)—are mature, and prototypes of these technologies have been tested in a realistic environment. Two backup technologies—disposable batteries and a navigation module with GPS only—are also mature. Since our last review, the program has focused on reducing the weight of subsystems and enhancing reliability by better integrating the subsystems and improving connections to the processor.

The Land Warrior system was to have used the JTRS radio (assessed elsewhere in this report), scheduled to be available in fiscal year 2011. In the meantime, the program is using a radio compatible with Stryker communications to provide voice, position, and command and control information at the team/squad level and higher.

The Stryker vehicle component of Land Warrior allows for battery recharging in the vehicle, communication between the dismounted soldier and vehicle using the radio, and access to the lower tactical internet through a gateway installed in the vehicle.

Design Stability

The program reported that 23 design drawings out of a total expected number of 70 were releasable at the January 2006 critical design review for Land Warrior, and that all 70 drawings are currently releasable.

Production Maturity

We could not assess the maturity of production processes for Land Warrior because the program does not collect statistical process control data during the system development phase. In the last quarter of fiscal year 2006, the Army Training and Doctrine Command conducted a user representative assessment of the system and the Army Test and Evaluation Command led a Limited User Test, both of which will inform a production decision in March 2007. According to the program office, General Dynamics plans to take lessons learned from the assessment to mature manufacturing processes.

Other Program Issues

The Land Warrior program has experienced significant challenges and delays in its 12-year history. The program restructured after contractor prototypes failed basic certification tests in 1998. Government testing revealed technical and reliability problems with Block I (Land Warrior-Initial Capability), which was subsequently terminated in 2003. Block II (Land Warrior-Stryker Interoperable) was restructured in 2004 in response to congressional direction to immediately field some Land Warrior capabilities to the current force. The restructured program—the Dismounted Battle Command System (DBCS)—was refocused in 2005 following a test event that concluded it had not demonstrated the necessary capabilities and was not mature. Elements of DBCS—such as a friendly force tracking capability—were modified and integrated into the next phase of the system, Land Warrior in support of Stryker.

The current program has been focused on developing an integrated Land Warrior capability in support of the Army's Stryker Brigades. Slightly less capable than Block II, this system was used to equip one Stryker battalion in fiscal year 2006 for assessment purposes. A program official reports that, following the assessment, the battalion decided to take the Land Warrior system with it to Iraq when it deploys in the third quarter of fiscal year 2007.

The Ground Soldier System—a future iteration of Land Warrior capability—will provide advanced capabilities. This future iteration is intended to provide a dismounted soldier capability to the Army's Future Combat Systems (FCS) and to units not associated with FCS.

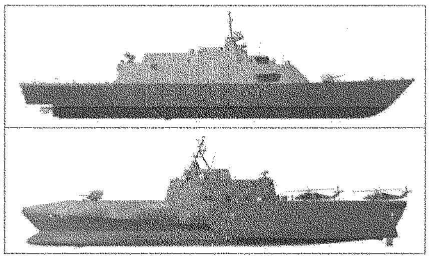
Due to significant Army-wide resource challenges, the Army has decided to not pursue further development and production of Land Warrior.

Agency Comments

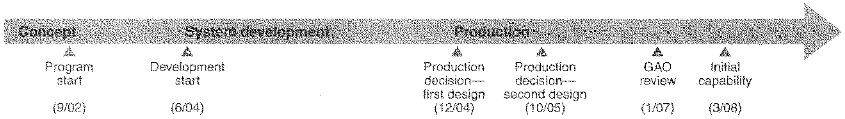
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Army provided technical comments which were incorporated as appropriate.

Littoral Combat Ship (LCS)

The Navy's LCS is a surface combatant optimized for littoral warfare with innovative hull designs and reconfigurable mission packages to counter threats in three mission areas: mine, antisubmarine, and surface warfare. The ship and mission packages are being developed in spirals with the first 15 ships, Flight 0, produced in two designs. The first ships of each design are currently under construction with deliveries expected in June and November 2007. We assessed only Flight 0 ships and their associated mission packages.



Source: (top) Lockheed Martin, (bottom) General Dynamics.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (9/02)
Development start (6/04)
Production decision—first design (12/04)
Production decision—second design (10/05)
GAO review (1/07)
Initial capability (3/08)

Program Essentials

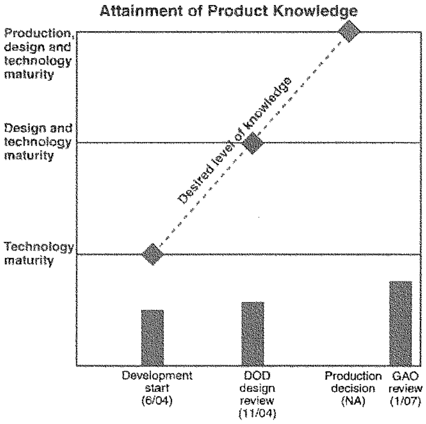
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The LCS program began production in December 2004 and recently began acquiring some elements of the mission packages. The program office identified 36 critical technologies for the mission packages and 21 technologies for the two ship designs. The Navy continues to test and mature technologies for the three mission packages, currently 22 of the 36 mission package technologies are fully mature; 9 are near full maturity; and 5 remain in development. The technologies that remain immature affect all three mission packages. All but one of the ship-specific technologies are fully mature or near maturity. Some cost and schedule growth has been experienced in ship construction due to issues in design and production.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



LCS Program

Technology Maturity

Seven of the technologies under development for LCS are used in multiple applications or mission packages. Since these technologies are used on different platforms or environments, the program office chose to assess them in each setting separately, resulting in a total of 36 critical technologies, 22 of which are currently mature.

Delivery of the first mine warfare mission package will align with delivery of the first ship in June 2007. Of the 16 technologies currently used for mine warfare, only the organic airborne and surface influence sweep system, remains immature. Tests to demonstrate this technology in a relevant environment are scheduled for the first quarter of fiscal year 2007. Five other technologies are close to full maturity, while 10 others are fully mature.

The first antisubmarine and surface warfare packages will align with delivery of the second LCS in fiscal year 2008. Of the 13 technologies dedicated to antisubmarine warfare, 3 remain in development, including the advanced deployable system and two subsystems for the antisubmarine variant of the remote mine-hunting vehicle. While the program expects to demonstrate the two subsystems in a relevant environment in late fiscal 2007, plans to mature advanced deployable system are unclear. An additional 4 technologies are near full maturity, while the remaining 6 are fully mature. Of the 7 technologies dedicated to surface warfare, the non-line-of-sight missile system is the only one not fully mature. It is expected to be demonstrated in a relevant environment in mid-fiscal year 2007. Since our last review, the unmanned surface vehicle was removed from the surface warfare mission, although it is still used in other missions.

The majority of ship-specific technologies are mature or close to full maturity. The Lockheed Martin design, the first to enter production, currently has 9 of 10 technologies mature or close to full maturity, only a system used to launch and retrieve small boats is not mature. The General Dynamics design currently has all of its technologies mature or close to full maturity. Since our last review the program has reduced the number of critical technologies monitored to conform with DOD's definition of a critical technology—a new or novel technology used to meet key requirements. Although not designated as critical, these technologies remain in the ships' design.

Design Stability

Design of mission packages and ships are tracked in a unique manner. To ensure technologies used in mission packages will be compatible with LCS, the program has established interface specifications that each system must meet. Design stability is tracked by monitoring changes to the requirements documents, execution of engineering change proposals, and the completion of contract deliverables related to drawings, ship specifications, and independent certification of the design. Developing commercial design standards for military use has created some challenges, contributing to a 6 month delay in the delivery of the first ship.

Production Maturity

Rather than using statistical process controls to monitor production readiness, the LCS program uses a number of metrics to track production. The primary means of monitoring production is an earned value management system, additionally the program tracks hours spent on rework, deficiencies detected and corrected, and the number of test procedures performed. Delays in delivery of ship propulsion components have also contributed to schedule growth for the first ship.

Other Program Issues

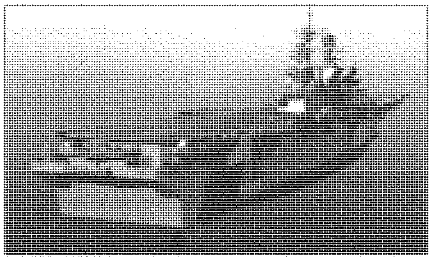
Costs for constructing Flight 0 ships have grown due to development of a formal cost estimate, incorporation of lessons learned in construction of the first ships, and the congressionally mandated addition of requirements for force protection and survivability.

Agency Comments

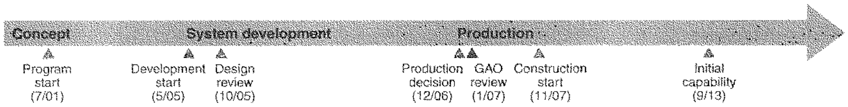
The Navy stated that the LCS modular open system architecture strategy decouples core seaframe design and construction from the phased delivery of focused mission package payloads. A robust risk management process tracks technologies under development to ensure they are matured and fulfill program requirements according to planned deployment timelines. The Navy continues to apply all available management tools to optimize unit cost and schedule through the challenges of first of class construction.

Amphibious Assault Ship Replacement Program (LHA 6)

The Navy's LHA 6 will replace aging Tarawa-class amphibious assault ships and is designed to embark, land, and support expeditionary forces. The LHA 6 design will feature enhanced aviation capabilities and is optimized to support new aircraft such as the V-22 Osprey and Joint Strike Fighter (JSF). LHA 6 is planned to be a modified variant of the LHD 8 amphibious assault ship currently under construction with delivery of the first ship expected in late 2011.



Source: LHA 6 Program Office, U.S. Navy.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (7/01)
Development start (5/05)
Design review (10/05)
Production decision (12/06)
GAO review (1/07)
Construction start (11/07)
Initial capability (9/13)

Program Essentials

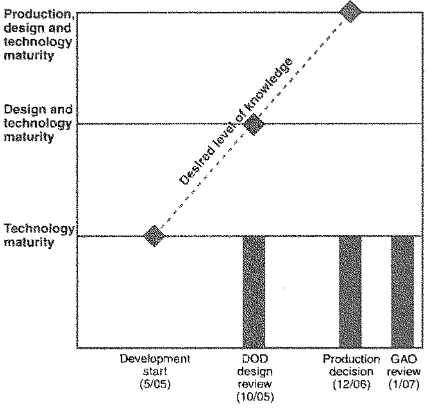
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

In 2005, DOD and the Navy determined that the LHA 6 program had no critical development technologies because all of the ship's critical systems and equipment utilize technologies from existing Navy programs. However, the program office has identified six key subsystems needed to achieve the system's full capability, one of which is not mature. Almost 45 percent of LHA 6 is based on the design of the LHD 8 ship currently under construction. A design review of LHA 6 was conducted in October 2005, and the Navy determined that LHA 6's preliminary design was stable.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



LHA 6 Program

Technology Maturity

In August 2005, the Navy concluded that all LHA 6 components and technologies are fully mature and that the program met technology requirements to enter system development. The Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Science and Technology concurred and the program proceeded without a formal technology readiness assessment. However, the program office has identified six key subsystems needed to achieve LHA 6's full capability—five of which are mature. The Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence suite (C4I); Ship Self Defense System (SSDS); Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC); Rolling Airframe Missile (RAM); and Evolved NATO Sea Sparrow Missile (ESSM) are all mature technologies used on numerous Navy ships. According to program officials, these technologies will not be modified for LHA 6 and further development will not be required for ship integration. The 500 ton air conditioning (AC) plants modified for LHA 6 are undergoing testing to ensure functionality. Finally, the Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS)—a new GPS-based aircraft landing system—is not yet mature.

The AC plant is the only machinery/auxiliary technology that will differ from the LHD 8 ship, but according to program officials it will be a minor adaptation of plants used aboard Virginia-class submarines. Program officials state that first article testing of the plant is in progress and scheduled to continue through June 2007. According to program officials, the plant met all ship specifications during its initial testing.

JPALS will be used to support the all-weather landings of next-generation Navy aircraft, including the Joint Strike Fighter. The system, however, is not yet mature because its major components have not been tested together. JPALS has not yet started system development, but is expected to be fielded on other ships prior to its integration on LHA 6. Program officials state that the LHA 6 design has incorporated space for the system based on initial estimates of its specifications. Furthermore, the legacy aviation control system, SPN-41A, will serve as the backup technology in the event that JPALS development is delayed beyond LHA 6 deployment and the introduction of the JSF. According to the program office, JPALS is not needed to achieve the operational requirements of LHA 6 and SPN-41A is sufficient to land the JSF if the aircraft is fielded before JPALS.

Design Stability

The program does not measure design stability by percentage of engineering drawings completed, and therefore was not assessed according to this metric. However, the Navy certified that LHA 6 has a stable preliminary design based on the determination of an independent technical evaluation board during the critical design review in October 2005. The program office plans to award a detail design and construction contract to Northrop Grumman Ship Systems in December 2006. Program officials state that they will use the engineering drawing schedule to track design stability.

According to program officials, almost 45 percent of the design effort will be based on drawings from LHD 8. Over half of the ship will require newly created designs or drawings modified from LHD 8. Major adjustments made from the LHD 8 design include expansion of the ship's aviation hanger deck to create additional space for future aircraft, removal of the well deck to accommodate the increased hanger space and additional aviation fuel capacity, and updated warfare systems.

Other Program Issues

According to program officials, one area of risk for the ship is the development of new software code for a portion of the machinery control system. LHA 6 is dependent on LHD 8 to provide 75 percent of its machinery control system software, as well as the automated bridge and diesel generator control systems software. Program officials said that this software has not yet been tested or demonstrated. All other software will be used on other Navy systems prior to LHA 6's delivery. Program officials expect LHA 6's schedule will accommodate this software development.

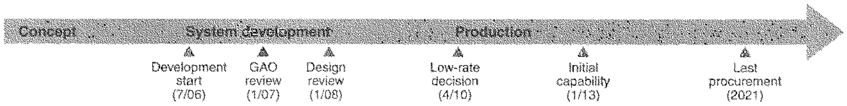
Agency Comments

In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Navy concurred with the information provided in this report.

Longbow Apache Block III

The Army's AH-64D Longbow Apache can be employed day or night, in adverse weather and obscurants, and is capable of engaging and destroying advanced threat weapon systems. The primary targets of the aircraft are mobile armor and air defense units, with secondary targets being threat helicopters. Block III enhancements are to ensure the Longbow Apache is compatible with the Future Combat System architecture, is a viable member of the future force, and is supportable through 2030. We assessed the Block III portion of the Apache.

Source: Boeing; Army Systems Program Office; Huntsville, AL.



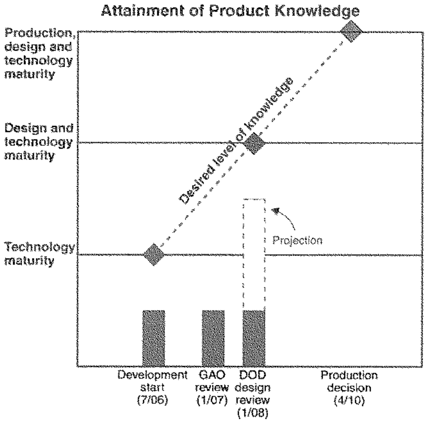
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The Apache Block III program entered the system development and demonstration phase in July 2006 with one critical technology, an improved drive system, approaching full maturity. The Apache Block III program plans to complete three phases of development and meet requirements through a series of technology insertions, each requiring integration, test, and qualification activities. The Army is reporting that at the start of development, these technology insertions were fully mature. Only the first phase of insertions will need to be installed at the factory; the others can be installed in the field. A production decision for the first phase is scheduled in 2010. Also, when it was approved for development, the Army was directed to extend the development schedule due to an aggressive test schedule, thereby increasing development cost.



Longbow Apache BLIII Program

Technology Maturity

The Army is reporting that the Apache Block III program entered system development in July 2006 with one critical technology, an improved drive system. That technology is approaching full maturity. The improved drive system technology will be used in a helicopter transmission for the first time. The technology improves the available power and increases reliability over the existing transmission. The drive system has been demonstrated in a relevant environment, and plans exist for flight testing in 2009 and 2010 to evaluate its full maturity.

The Army was reporting on 15 critical technologies prior to development start. However, as it reached development start, the Army opted to report on only 1 technology as critical. The remainder of the 15 technologies are not considered critical. The program plans to meet requirements through a series of technology insertions that will require integration, test, and qualification activities. The Army is reporting that at the start of development, these technology insertions were fully mature and will be incorporated into the system development and demonstration program in three phases. Each Apache aircraft will go to the factory for Block III modification only one time—for the first phase of insertions—and other modifications will be retrofitable in the field. A production decision for that initial phase of development is scheduled in 2010.

The technology insertions are divided into two primary categories: those related directly to processor upgrades and those independent of processor upgrades. The first phase of planned insertions addresses some of the processor upgrades and all of the nonprocessor upgrades. The processor-dependent insertions involve both hardware and software upgrades and are not field retrofitable. They include level IV unmanned aerial vehicle control, improved electronics/modular open system approach, aircraft survivability equipment, interim communications suite, modernized signal processor unit, instrument meteorological conditions/instrument flight rules hardware and software, and radar electronic unit. Those insertions that are independent of the processor include the improved drive system, engine enhancements, composite main rotor blades, airframe life extension, and training device concurrency. This phase is planned to be complete in 2014. The second and third development efforts are processor upgrades that are software modifications and are field retrofitable. Phase two is scheduled for completion in 2016 and includes the insertion of embedded diagnostics and a common data link. The final phase includes cognitive decision aids, image fusion, aided target, detection and classification, supportability improvements, multimode laser, fire control radar, and radio frequency interferometer improvements. The final phase will be completed after 2016.

According to program officials, the technical risk involved with these technologies is low even though no backup technology exists. If, for some reason, the technology is unavailable for insertion at its given time, the program would proceed with existing technology until the new technology can be incorporated. Further, cost impact for incorporating the technologies is expected to be minimal given the ability to add software changes in the field and because the helicopter would have to be returned to the production plant only once to accomplish upgrades.

Design Stability

Program officials estimate that 100 percent of its 1,546 drawings will be released by the design review scheduled for January 2008. However, until the maturity of critical technologies and technology insertions have been demonstrated, the potential for design changes remains.

Other Program Issues

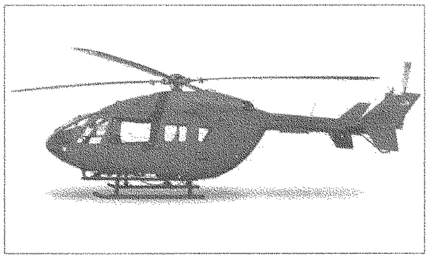
The Apache Block III program was approved for system demonstration and development in July 2006. On approval, the Defense Acquisition Board directed the Army to extend the development schedule due to an aggressive test plan that resulted in a higher development cost for the program. Also, the Apache Block III's production decision slipped from March 2009 to April 2010.

Agency Comments

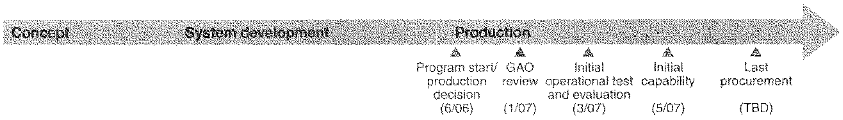
The Army was provided an opportunity to comment on a draft of this assessment, but did not have any comments.

Light Utility Helicopter (LUH)

The Army's Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) is a new aircraft acquisition that will conduct exclusively noncombat missions in support of specific Army tasks to include homeland security support operations, disaster relief, search and rescue, general support, medical evacuation, and support for Army training and test centers. The Army is purchasing a commercially available helicopter for this mission rather than enter into a new development program. The commercial system has been in use as a medical evacuation helicopter.



Source: EADS North America Contract Photographer.

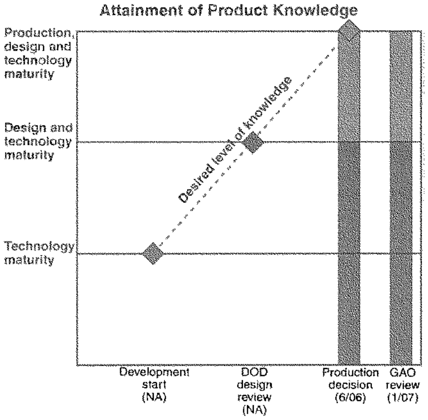

Concept
System development
Production
Program start/ production decision (6/06)
GAO review (1/07)
Initial operational test and evaluation (3/07)
Initial capability (5/07)
Last procurement (TBD)

Program Essentials
Prime contractor: EADS North America Defense Co.
Program office: Huntsville, Ala.
Funding needed to complete:
 R&D: $0.0 million
 Procurement: [illegible]
 Total funding: [illegible]
 Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	$0.0	$0.0	0.0
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	322	322	0.0
Acquisition cycle time (months)	11	11	0.0

The LUH is a commercial off-the-shelf procurement. No developmental efforts are planned, and the system's technology and design are mature. Production maturity is high since the selected system is a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certified aircraft, the Eurocopter-145, that is currently in use commercially. The contract for the system was awarded on June 30, 2006. The system is scheduled to undergo limited operational test and evaluation in March 2007 and its initial operational capability is planned for May 2007.



LUH Program

Technology Maturity

We did not assess the LUH's critical technologies because the LUH is an off-the-shelf procurement of a fully developed, FAA-certified commercial aircraft. As a result, the LUH program office states that the system's five critical technologies are mature. These critical technologies are (1) network-ready communications, (2) cabin size sufficient for 2 crew and 6 passenger seats, (3) force protection defined as the capability of the crew to operate all flight controls while wearing standard protection suits, (4) survivability defined as meeting FAA standards for crashworthy seats and fuel tanks, and (5) performance defined as the ability to carry 2 patients on litters with a medical attendant and equipment. Program officials state that no development efforts are to take place and that the aircraft will not be modified.

Design Stability

We did not assess the LUH's design stability because program officials said that the design of the LUH is stable, since the aircraft is already a fully developed commercial aircraft. Also, since the LUH is a currently flying, fully developed aircraft, the program office is not requiring the contractor to provide technical drawings for the system.

Production Maturity

Program officials state that production maturity is at a high level because the aircraft is a commercially available helicopter and production lines are already established. For this reason, they will not require statistical process control data on the system as it is produced. The system will undergo limited operational tests in March 2007 and be fielded shortly thereafter, in May 2007.

Other Program Issues

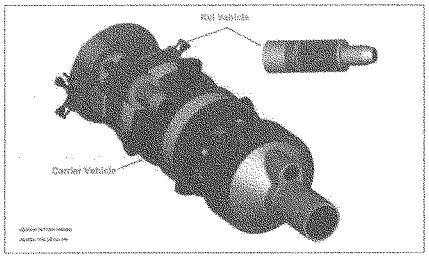
The Army awarded a low-rate initial production contract for up to 42 aircraft in June 2006, with full-rate production decision scheduled for May 2007. The Army plans to acquire a total of 322 aircraft. The program is an FAA-certified aircraft already being commercially produced and the contractor will provide total logistics support. The helicopter will not fly combat missions or be deployed into combat areas.

Agency Comments

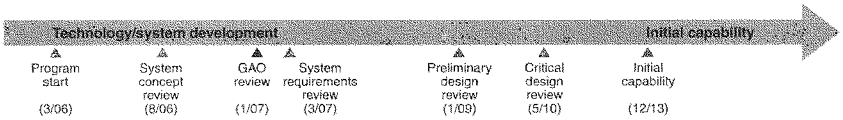
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Army provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Multiple Kill Vehicle (MKV)

MDA's MKV is being designed as an optional payload for midcourse defense systems. It will engage midcourse threat clusters with multiple small kill vehicles launched from a carrier vehicle. Key components to the system include the carrier and kill vehicles, payload communications, adapter, telemetry, and shroud. We assessed the carrier vehicle and kill vehicle capabilities currently under development and expected to be available in the Block 2012-2014 time frame.


Kill Vehicle
Carrier Vehicle

Source: Lockheed Martin.


Technology/system development
Initial capability
Program start (3/06)
System concept review (8/06)
GAO review (1/07)
System requirements review (3/07)
Preliminary design review (1/09)
Critical design review (5/10)
Initial capability (12/13)

Program Essentials

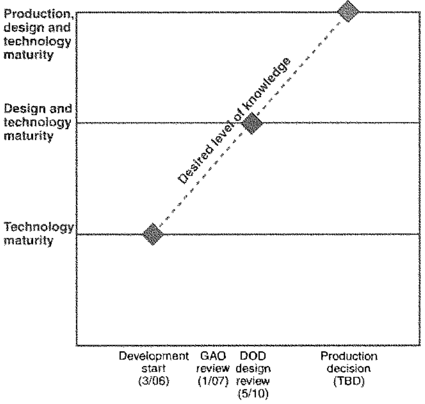
Prime contractor: Lockheed Martin
Program office: [illegible]
Funding FY07-FY11:
RDT&E: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: NA

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	NA	NA	NA
Total quantities	NA	NA	NA
Acquisition cycle time (months)	NA	NA	NA

[illegible]

The MKV program transitioned from a technology development to system development in 2006 with, we believe, none of its 18 critical technologies mature. While the program assessed 14 of its 18 critical technologies as approaching maturity, these technologies have yet to demonstrate the form and fit required for the MKV. The program is trying to lower program risk by creating a decision point in 2009 to assess the maturity of its highest risk technology, engagement management algorithms. If the algorithms are not mature at that time, the program will consider continuing development of the carrier vehicle as a unitary kill vehicle without multiple kill vehicles. Additionally, we were unable to assess design stability because, according to program officials, the program has not yet selected a final concept that includes the number of kill vehicles on the carrier vehicle.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



MKV Program

Technology Maturity

According to our analysis, none of the program's 18 critical technologies are mature. The technologies on the carrier vehicle are the divert and attitude control system (DACS), cooler, inertial measurement units (IMU), kill enhancement device (KED), focal plane array (FPA), optics, power, processor, and carrier vehicle-ground datalink. The technologies on the kill vehicle are the DACS, seeker FPA, KED, cooler, optics, IMUs, power, processors, and carrier vehicle-to-kill vehicle datalink. According to the program, 14 of these technologies are approaching matnrity and 4 are not mature—the FPA and optics on the carrier vehicle, and the KED on both the carrier vehicle and the kill vehicle. We disagree with the program's evaluation of the readiness of the 14 technologies assessed as approaching maturity. Although all of the critical technologies have been used in previous programs, the hardware has not been tested in a smaller form and with the correct fit for the MKV program. Program officials agreed that these technologies may need to be repackaged to properly fit on the MKV and further testing may be needed at that time to ensure the technology is mature. The KEDs are optional hardware, which the program will decide either to pursue or defer in the Block 2008 time frame.

The program assessed its top risk for the program to be payload system algorithm maturity. Without the maturity of these algorithms, the system will not be able to engage targets with the multiple kill vehicles. While the program has developed risk mitigation plans, program officials are also designing for low risk by developing the carrier vehicle prior to developing the kill vehicles. At a key decision point in 2009, the program will assess the maturity of the algorithms and, if they are still immature, consider whether to continue development of the carrier vehicle without multiple kill vehicles. Program officials say that if the program continues with a single carrier vehicle, multiple kill vehicles could be added at a later date. However, pursuing this option would make MKV very similar to the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System's Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle, although program officials claim the unitary carrier vehicle would be more producible.

Design Stability

We were unable to assess the design stability of the MKV program because the program has not yet selected the final configuration of the MKV system. According to program officials, the configuration has been narrowed down to two main concepts with varying numbers of kill vehicles on the carrier vehicle. Program officials hoped to finalize the MKV concept by late October 2006. The program intends to use engineering and manufacturing readiness levels, technology readiness levels, and software readiness levels to assess the maturity of the MKV design leading up to the system critical design review scheduled for 2010.

Other Program Issues

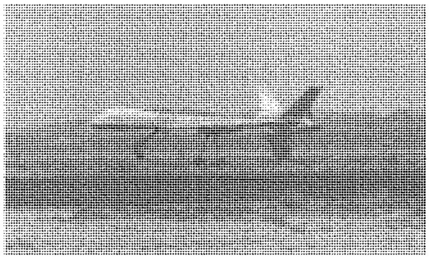
Program officials are anticipating schedule delays for the program due to the $20 million cut in the fiscal year 2007 budget they received in September 2006. The officials stated that they expect that the system requirement reviews for the payload, carrier vehicle, and kill vehicle planned for summer 2007 will be postponed.

Agency Comments

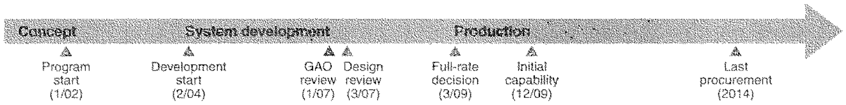
The program office provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

MQ-9 Reaper Unmanned Aircraft System

The Air Force's MQ-9 Reaper (formerly Predator B) is a multirole, medium-to-high altitude endurance unmanned aerial vehicle system capable of flying at higher speeds and higher altitudes than its predecessor, the MQ-1 Predator A. The Reaper is designed to provide a ground attack capability to find, fix, track, target, engage, and assess small ground mobile or fixed targets. Each system will consist of four aircraft, a ground control station, and a satellite communications suite. We assessed the first increment of the air vehicle.



Source: General Atomics-Aeronautical Systems, Incorporated.



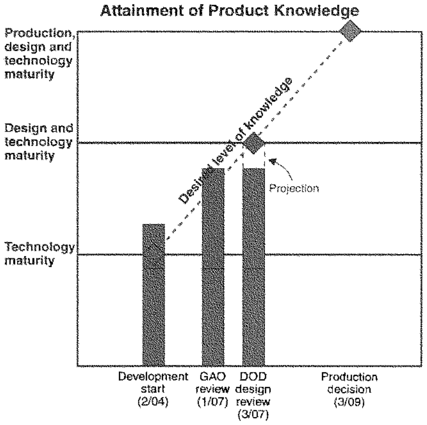
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The Reaper entered system development in February 2004 with three of its four critical technologies mature. The fourth technology has experienced several delays, but it began weapons release testing in December 2006. Once mature, the technology will enable the program to perform its primary mission—to destroy enemy targets. The Air Force has completed over 80 percent of the design drawings for the first increment and projects that it will have achieved design stability by the 2007 critical design review. However, the program has already begun producing aircraft for an interim combat capability and plans to produce additional preproduction aircraft with improved interim capabilities without demonstrating production maturity. Initial operational testing is not scheduled to begin until 2008. At that point, nearly one-third of tbe quantity will be on contract or delivered.



MQ-9 (Reaper) Program

Technology Maturity

Three of the Reaper's four critical technologies—the synthetic aperture radar, the multispectral targeting system, and the air vehicle—are fully mature. The fourth technology, the stores management subsystem, is designed to integrate and store data necessary to launch munitions. This subsystem has experienced several delays; it was initially expected to be mature in 2004. The latest delay was a result of incorporating the Hellfire missile into the subsystem. It began weapons release testing in December 2006. Once mature, the technology will enable the Reaper to perform its primary mission, to destroy enemy targets. Subsequent increments may require other new technologies.

Design Stability

The program office currently reports that over 80 percent of the drawings for the first increment are complete. Since our last report, the program's critical design review has slipped about 4 months, primarily due to the requirement to incorporate the Hellfire missile. The program office expects 94 percent of the drawings for the first increment will be completed by the critical design review, now scheduled for March 2007. Program officials acknowledge that additional drawings will be needed for subsequent increments.

Production Maturity

The program does not plan to use statistical process controls to ensure product quality. Instead, it plans to use other quality control measures such as scrap, rework, and repair to track product quality. Production work on the Predator and Reaper and the Army's Warrior have greatly increased the contractor's business base and workforce requirements. OSD and Air Force officials have raised concerns about the contractor's production capacity to meet this expanded business base.

Other Program Issues

The Reaper program has undergone two significant changes over the past year. First, the requirement to add the Hellfire missile delayed the delivery of the interim combat capability aircraft by about 7 months. Second, the Air Force decided to provide an early fielding capability to the user. While these aircraft will be more capable than the interim combat aircraft, they will not have the full capability. According to program officials, the hardware in the early fielding aircraft will meet most of the required capabilities; subsequent aircraft will have upgrades to the radar and weapons as well as further software developments and technical orders.

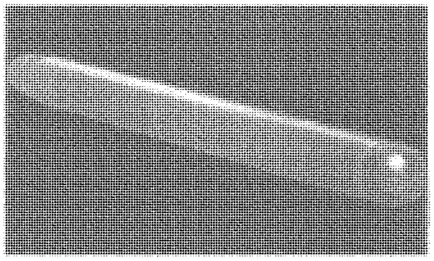
The Reaper's acquisition approach increases the risks of concurrent design and production. The Air Force will have already contracted for one-third of the total production aircraft quantity before it completes initial operational testing. Changes stemming from the test program would further cause a perturbation to the aircraft's cost, schedule, and manufacturing plan.

Agency Comments

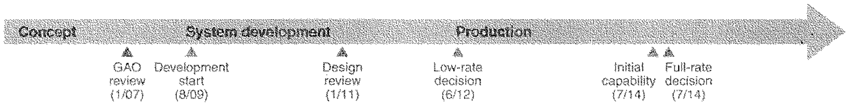
The Air Force provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

21" Mission Reconfigurable Unmanned Undersea Vehicle System (MRUUVS)

Launched and recovered from submarine torpedo tubes, the Navy's 21" MRUUVS will independently perform a range of information-gathering activities. It supplants two related programs now limited to prototype development, the long-term mine reconnaissance system and the advanced development unmanned undersea vehicle. Each MRUUVS will include the vehicle, combat and control interfaces, and equipment for either mine countermeasure or intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions (ISR).



Source: Unmanned Undersea Vehicles Program Office.



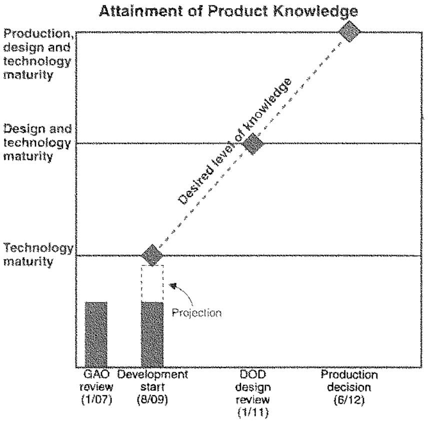
Program Essentials
Prime contractor: [illegible]
Program office: [illegible]
Funding FY07-FY11:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of NA	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	NA	[illegible]	NA
Procurement cost	NA	NA	NA
Total program cost	NA	[illegible]	NA
Program unit cost	NA	NA	NA
Total quantities	NA	NA	NA
Acquisition cycle time (months)	NA	[illegible]	NA

[illegible]

One of the MRUUVS program's six critical technologies is currently mature and the remaining five are approaching maturity. While the program expects to have four of the remaining five critical technologies mature by development start—now scheduled for August 2009—the sonar is not expected to reach maturity until 2010. Although many technologies have undergone at-sea testing, the program plans to rely on development efforts in other programs to demonstrate full maturity of some of MRUUVS's critical technologies. As a result of program restructuring and budget reductions, the milestone review to authorize development start has slipped by over 2 years since last year's assessment.



21" MRUUVS Program

Technology Maturity

One of six critical technologies is currently mature and the remaining five are approaching maturity. The program expects to have all but one critical technology fully mature by system development start—now planned for August 2009. In some cases the program plans to rely on development efforts in other programs to demonstrate maturity for MRUUVS technologies.

The maturity of software that provides MRUUVS's autonomous capability has been demonstrated. Commercial unmanned undersea vehicles (UUV) have demonstrated autonomy, and at-sea testing on a prototype vehicle in January 2006 demonstrated autonomous control and decision-making capabilities. Nevertheless, software development will continue, with incremental improvements added as they are developed.

Technology to manage the vehicle launch and recovery process involves acoustic signaling and mechanical activities. A predecessor vehicle on which MRUUVS is based has demonstrated homing, docking, and replacement into a model submarine hull. MRUUVS's launch capability was demonstrated in January 2006 during at-sea tests with a submarine. Due to a mechanical failure, however, the vehicle could not be recovered back into the submarine. A test is planned for 2007 to demonstrate end-to-end vehicle recovery with a submarine.

The Littoral Precision Undersea Mapping Array enables object identification and obstacle avoidance. An advanced development model has been developed, tested, and deployed on a 21" vehicle, thereby demonstrating its mine identification capability. The Navy had planned to test a more advanced, lighter-weight prototype, but has now eliminated this development based on budget cuts. Instead, the program believes it can achieve full maturity through modeling and simulation and demonstrations of the array—without a test vehicle.

ISR technology already exists and is operational on Navy unmanned aerial vehicles. However, packaging the required technology within the size, space, and weight constraints of MRUUVS will require miniaturized, highly compact, and lightweight components that can be adapted for an ocean environment. In 2006 the ISR suite was packaged into a 21" prototype for at-sea testing. While this demonstrated partial maturity, the program does not expect additional testing and development to occur until after a development contract is awarded. The program believes that maturity will be demonstrated by October 2008 through sensor development on other programs.

While conventional batteries that could support MRUUVS endurance requirements have successfully been demonstrated on other UUVs, the program office intends to leverage development of rechargeable batteries from the Advanced SEAL Delivery System program for use on MRUUVS. While these batteries have attained functional capability, further development is necessary to ensure fit into a small unmanned undersea vehicle.

In January 2006 the synthetic aperture sonar was tested at-sea using a larger UUV. The Navy eliminated further development of a final prototype due to cost growth and design failures. Full maturity of the sonar is not expected until fiscal year 2010—after a contract for MRUUVS development is awarded.

Other Program Issues

Since last year's assessment the program has undergone significant restructuring. In February 2006 the Navy implemented a new program strategy, which delayed development start from July 2006 to late 2008. According to program officials, program restructuring was necessary not only because of Navy-wide fiscal issues, but also because of technology immaturity and problems with system integration.

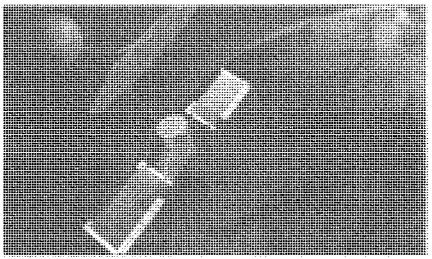
Additional changes resulted from the most recent appropriations, which reduced the program by $16.9 million in fiscal year 2007. As a consequence of this reduction, the acquisition and contracting strategies are again being revised. Program officials expect additional delays in the MRUUVS program, with development start slipping to 2009.

Agency Comments

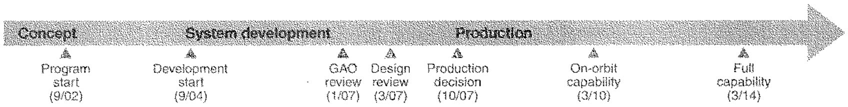
The Navy provided technical comments to a draft of this assessment, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Mobile User Objective System (MUOS)

The Navy's MUOS, a satellite communication system, is expected to provide low data rate voice and data communications capable of penetrating most weather, foliage, and manmade structures. It is designed to replace the Ultra High Frequency (UHF) Follow-On satellite system currently in operation and provide support to worldwide, multiservice, mobile, and fixed-site terminal users. MUOS consists of a network of advanced UHF satellites and multiple ground segments. We assessed both the space and ground segments.



Source: Lockheed Martin Corporation. ©2006 Lockheed Martin Corporation.



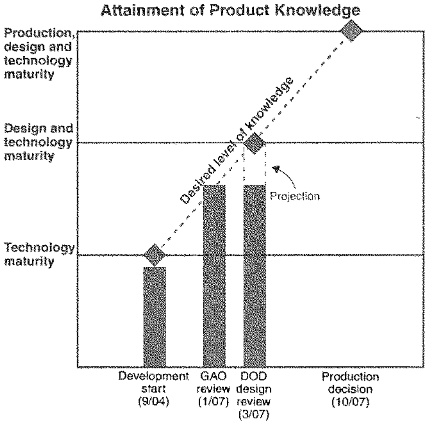
Program Essentials

Prime contractor: [illegible]
[illegible]
Program office: [illegible]
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	6	6	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

In September 2004, the MUOS program was authorized to begin development. All seven of the program's critical technologies are mature. The program is ordering long lead items for the first two satellites before achieving a final design. This early procurement could lead to rework, causing cost increases and schedule delays if relevant designs change prior to critical design review. While the MUOS development has become time-critical due to the operational failure of two UHF Follow-On satellites, the program's ground software development represents significant cost and schedule growth risk. In addition, problems encountered under the Joint Tactical Radio System program may result in underutilization of MUOS capabilities.



MUOS Program

Technology Maturity

Eight of nine critical technologies were mature at the development start decision in September 2004. The number of critical technologies has since varied due to continuing program analyses of required technologies. According to the program office, all seven of the program's critical technologies are mature.

Design Stability

The MUOS program is procuring long lead items for the first two satellites before achieving a final design. According to the program office, $71.9 million (constant 2007 dollars) in long lead items is to be ordered before critical design review in March 2007. Such procurement could lead to rework if relevant designs change prior to the system-level critical design review, causing program cost increases and schedule delays. According to the program office, delaying long lead procurement until after critical design review would cause the program schedule to slip. In addition, the program office noted that the majority of the long lead procurements are planned after respective segment-level critical design reviews (which precede the system-level critical design review) and that most are for standard commercial satellite bus components.

The program office estimates 3,020 drawings to be required for the MUOS design. The development contract requires 90 percent of the design drawings as a condition of conducting critical design review. As of September 2006, 1,692 drawings had been completed.

Other Program Issues

The importance of the first MUOS launch has increased due to the unexpected failures of two UHF Follow-On satellites, one in June 2005 and another in September 2006. As a result, communication capabilities are expected to degrade below those required in November 2007, almost 3 years earlier than estimated at MUOS development start. DOD is examining options for addressing a communications capability gap, including developing an integrated waveform to increase communications capacity provided by existing satellites and continuing to lease satellite communications capacity. According to the MUOS program manager, accelerating the MUOS schedule likely would increase program cost and schedule risks and options to develop new gap-filler satellites would not be viable due to the short development timeframes required.

According to the program office, development of MUOS ground software represents one of the highest risks to the program due to the size and complexity of the contractor's design. A 2006 independent program assessment also concluded that MUOS software development represents significant risk. The program office stated that the ground software is to be developed in three builds consisting of multiple increments to mitigate schedule risk. Additionally, the program intends to track and assess software development using numerous metrics we have found to be useful for program success, such as those for cost, schedule, defects, and quality. As of August 2006, early software development efforts are meeting cost and schedule goals. However, cost and schedule growth risks remain due to the concurrent development of the three builds. Specifically, during the approximate 4-year software development effort, about one-half of this period is to consist of concurrent development among the software builds. Such concurrency can increase the severity of software problems due to their cascading cost and schedule impacts on other builds.

Full utilization of MUOS capabilities is dependent on the fielding of terminals developed under the Joint Tactical Radio System (JTRS) program. However, development problems encountered under the JTRS program have resulted in deferrals of requirements and have increased risk that MUOS capabilities will be underutilized until MUOS-compliant terminals are fielded.

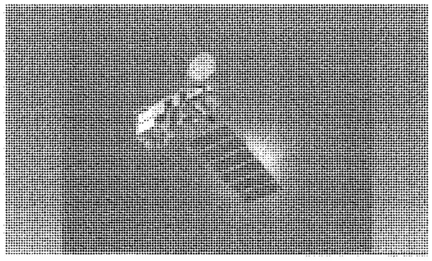
According to the program office, MUOS satellites can be launched, and their legacy payload capability can be used to support warfighter requirements if problems are encountered with MUOS ground software or JTRS synchronization.

Agency Comments

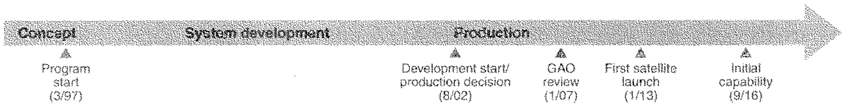
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Navy provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS)

NPOESS is a tri-agency National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), DOD, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) satellite program to monitor the weather and environment through the year 2026. Current NOAA and DOD satellites will be merged into a single national system. The program consists of five segments: space; command, control, and communications; interface data processing; launch; and field terminal software. We assessed all segments.



Source: NPOESS Integrated Program Office.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (3/97)
Development start/ production decision (8/02)
GAO review (1/07)
First satellite launch (1/13)
Initial capability (9/16)

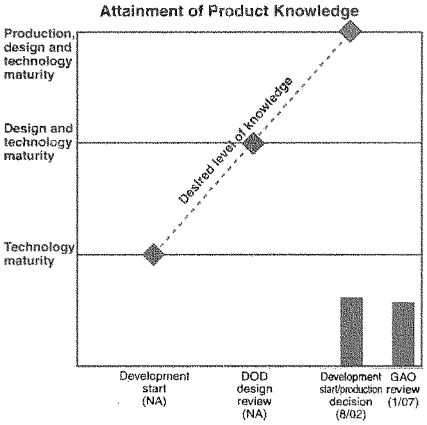
Program Essentials
Prime contractor: Northrop Grumman Space Technology
Program office: Silver Spring, MD
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: TBD
Procurement: TBD
Total funding: TBD
Procurement quantity: 2

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of 08/2002	Latest 12/2006	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]

Following our review last year, 7 of the original 14 critical technologies were removed from the NPOESS program. One was removed in 2005 and 6 more in June 2006 as part of the program's restructure due to a Nunn-McCurdy (10 U.S.C. 2433) unit cost breach at the 25 percent threshold. The 7 remaining technologies are expected to be mature by design review in January 2009. The program office is not collecting statistical process control data to assess production maturity because of the small number of satellites to be produced. As part of a mandatory certification process, the program was restructured and will only include the procurement of two satellites and the deletion of a critical sensor. The launch of the first satellite was delayed an additional 28 months to early 2013.



NPOESS Program

Technology Maturity

Only 1 of the program's 14 original critical technologies was mature at the production decision in August 2002. In 2005, 1 critical technology was deleted and 6 more were deleted in 2006. Four of the deleted technologies were associated with a major sensor, which was removed from NPOESS. Four of the 7 remaining technologies are mature, and the program projects that all 7 will be mature by the design review in January 2009. Only 3 of the remaining technologies have a backup technology.

The program undertook the NPOESS Preparatory Project, a demonstration satellite, to reduce risk and provide a bridging mission for NASA's Earth Observing System. This project is to provide data processing centers with an early opportunity to work with sensors, ground controls, and data-processing systems and allow for incorporating lessons learned into the four NPOESS satellites. Under the restructured NPOESS program, the satellite is to demonstrate the remaining three major sensors and one noncritical sensor in an operational environment and was scheduled for launch in May 2006. Since our assessment last year, the launch has been delayed from May 2006 until January 2010—a total of about 44 months.

Design Stability

In August 2002, the program committed to the fabrication and production of two satellites with operational capability before achieving design stability or production maturity. There are no drawing numbers available at this time due to the program restructure. Program officials indicated they are in the process of revising the design drawings to accommodate the deletion of a major sensor. These revisions could result in significant spacecraft design modifications. The design review date has been delayed 33 months to January 2009.

Production Maturity

We could not assess production maturity because, according to the program office, it does not collect statistical process control data due to the small number of satellites to be built. However, program officials stated that the contractors track and use various metrics to track subcomponent production, such as rework percentages and defect containment.

Other Program Issues

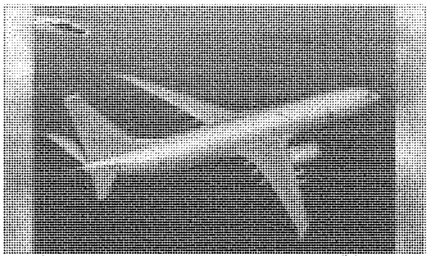
The launch of the first satellite has been delayed an additional 28 months to early 2013. The restructured NPOESS program includes two satellites funded using RDT&E appropriations, with the option in fiscal year 2010 for two additional satellites using the existing contract, funded with procurement appropriations. In addition, a deleted major sensor was to collect data to produce microwave imagery and other meteorological and oceanographic data. However, the program will now include developing a competition for a new replacement sensor coinciding with the second R&D satellite. The program restructure will also result in reduced satellite data collection coverage, requiring dependence on a European satellite for coverage during midmorning hours. Although the program has reduced the number of satellites it will produce, the program acquisition unit cost per satellite is about 23 percent above the 2005 approved program baseline.

Agency Comments

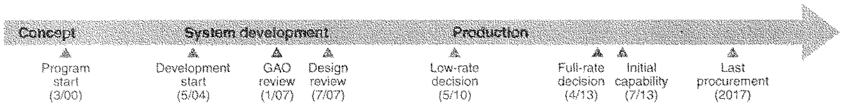
In commenting on our draft, the Air Force generally concurred with our findings and offered technical comments for our consideration. We incorporated the technical comments where appropriate. In addition, the Air Force stated that the NPOESS program completed the Nunn-McCurdy (10 U.S.C. 2433) certification process on June 5, 2006. The Air Force noted that the Integrated Program Office is now tracking NPOESS development to an interim program plan and that the program office has increased contractor oversight through additional staff and processes. Moreover, according to Air Force officials, the program executive's office is establishing various independent review teams.

P-8A Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft (P-8A MMA)

The Navy's P-8A Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft (P-8A MMA) is the replacement for the P-3C Orion. Its primary roles are persistent antisubmarine warfare; antisurface warfare; and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities. The P-8A shares an integrated maritime patrol mission with the Broad Area Maritime Surveillance Unmanned Aerial System (BAMS UAS). These two systems are intended to sustain and improve the Navy's maritime warfighting capability.



Source: The Boeing Company, ©2005 The Boeing Company.



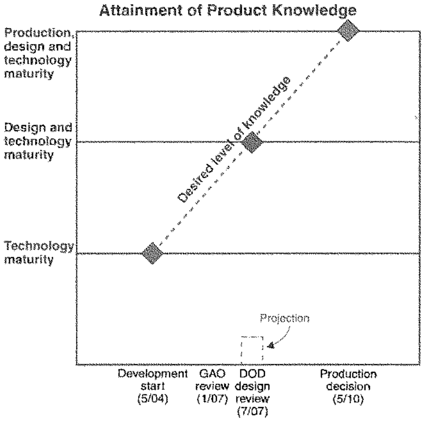
Program Essentials

Prime contractor: The Boeing Company
Program office: Patuxent River, MD
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: $[illegible] million
Procurement: $[illegible] million
Total funding: $[illegible] million
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of 05/2004	Latest 12/2006	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	115	115	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The P-8A program entered development with none of its four critical technologies mature. The program developed maturation plans and identified mature backup technologies for each of the critical technologies. According to program officials, the P-8A would lose some capabilities but still meet its minimum requirements if it used these backups. Since our assessment of the P-8A effort last year, the program has decided to use one of its backups. Two of the remaining three critical technologies are not anticipated to reach maturity until 2008 and 2009, at least 4 years later than recommended by best practices. The program office was unable to provide the number of drawings completed, but expects that 80 percent of the design drawings will be released by critical design review in 2007.



P-8A MMA Program

Technology Maturity

None of the P-8A's four critical technologies were mature when it entered development in May 2004. The program had previously expected all four technologies to be demonstrated in a relevant environment by design review in July 2007. Since our last assessment, the program has decided not to use the acoustic bellringer algorithms. They will instead use the backup technology, which is baseline signal processing without the bellringers. Bellringers are advanced signal-processing aids that provide sorting and identification of specific sounds. The backup is being used because an analysis of bellringer performance showed that it would not meet expectations. The bellringer algorithms were not required to meet baseline performance requirements, but had the potential to provide increased performance above the required capability.

None of the three remaining critical technologies—electronic support measures (ESM) digital receiver, data fusion, and integrated rotary sonobuoy launcher—are mature. These technologies have not moved beyond the laboratory environment, and have not matured since the beginning of development in May 2004. The program office stated that decisions on using backup technologies for the ESM digital receiver and the sonobuoy launcher may not be made until after design review.

The final production hardware is complete for the ESM digital receiver, a technology being leveraged from the EA-18G program. Technology maturity will be demonstrated by design review, 3 years later than recommended by best practices standards. The data fusion and the integrated rotary sonobuoy launcher have not been integrated into a prototype system, but are expected to reach maturity in 2008 and 2009 respectively, at least 4 years later than recommended by best practice standards.

Design Stability

The P-8A program office was unable to provide the number of drawings expected or currently completed. As a result, we could not assess current design stability. The program office expects that 80 percent of the design drawings will be released to manufacturing at critical design review in 2007.

Other Program Issues

As of June 2006, the P-8A program is on budget and on schedule. However, if the P-8A fails to develop as expected or experiences schedule slippage, the Navy would have to continue relying on its aging P-3C Orion fleet.

The P-8A shares the persistent intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance role with the BAMS UAS. The BAMS UAS development start was delayed 2 years until October 2007. If the BAMS UAS does not develop as planned or continues to experience schedule delays, the P-8A is its fallback and according to the Navy, the overall cost of the program would increase due to a need to procure additional P-8A aircraft.

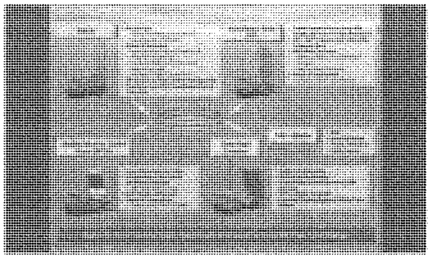
Another program that may impact the P-8A program is the Aerial Common Sensor (ACS). The ACS is intended to replace three current systems, including the Navy's EP-3. However, the Army terminated the ACS contract in January 2006 because the airframe selected could not accommodate the intended mission equipment. Decisions concerning the ACS program will determine whether the Navy participates in a future Army-led ACS program. One of the alternatives assessed by the Navy to replace the EP-3 included incorporating the ACS equipment onto the P-8A airframe.

Agency Comments

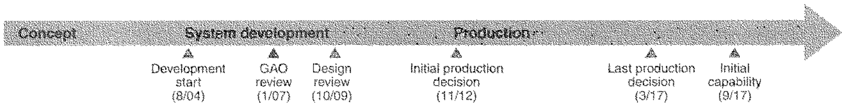
The Navy concurred with GAO's assessment of the P-8A MMA program. The Navy stated that the program continues to manage the three remaining critical technologies. Furthermore, the maturation of these technologies is on schedule and will be assessed at the critical design review planned for the third quarter of fiscal year 2007. The airplane design remains approximately 70 percent in common with that of the commercial 737-800 baseline. Over 25 percent of the detailed design drawings are now complete. The metrics for measuring drawing release are now defined and are being used as one critical measurement to assess design maturity for the critical design review. According to the Navy, the program continues to meet or exceed the cost, schedule, and performance parameters defined in the program baseline.

PATRIOT/MEADS Combined Aggregate Program (CAP) Fire Unit

The Army's Patriot/MEADS Combined Aggregate Program is the process by which the Patriot missile system transitions to the MEADS. The MEADS mission is to provide low-to-medium altitude air and missile defense with the capability to counter, defeat, or destroy tactical ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and other air-breathing threats. MEADS is a codevelopment program among the United States, Germany, and Italy. We assessed the MEADS fire unit portion of the program.



Source: Lower Tier Project Office, Combined Aggregate Program (LTPO-CAP).


Concept
System development
Production
Development start (8/04)
GAO review (1/07)
Design review (10/09)
Initial production decision (11/12)
Last production decision (3/17)
Initial capability (9/17)

Program Essentials

[illegible]

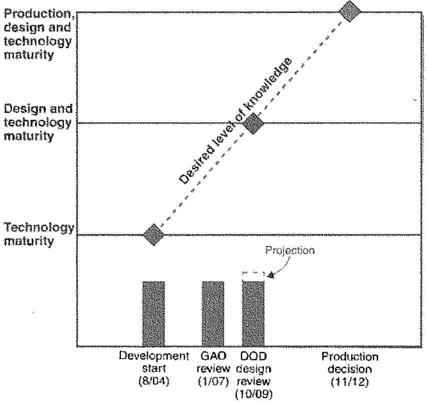
Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The MEADS fire unit began development in 2004 with two mature critical technologies, three critical technologies nearing maturity, and one immature critical technology. The technologies remain at these levels. Program plans call for a system design review in 2009, but officials estimate that only one of the six fire unit technologies will be more mature at that time than at development start. The program office anticipates that all critical technologies will be fully mature by the start of production in the first quarter of fiscal year 2013.

Current plans call for the insertion of MEADS components into Patriot Fire Units beginning in 2008 and continuing in 2010 and 2013. However, this could change because plans for these insertions are under review.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



PATRIOT/MEADS CAP Fire Unit Program

Technology Maturity

Only two of the six critical technologies—launcher electronics and Patriot Advanced Capability (PAC)-3 missile integration—are mature. Three other critical technologies—the low noise exciter that manages the radars' frequencies, the cooling system for the radars, and a slip ring that carries power and coolants to the radars—are nearing maturity. The remaining critical technology—the transmit/receive module that transmits/receives signals for the fire control radar—is immature.

The project office estimates that the maturity level of the low noise exciter, the radar cooling system, and the slip ring will remain unchanged when product development begins and that the transmit receive module will be near full maturity. The office expects all critical technologies to be fully mature by the start of production in late 2012. There are no backup technologies for any of the MEADS critical technologies.

Design Stability

We could not assess the design stability of MEADS because the number of releasable drawings and total drawings expected were not available. The program office expects to know the total number of releasable drawings at the design review in 2009.

Other Program Issues

MEADS is being developed to employ the current PAC-3 missile and the future PAC-3 missile segment enhancement variant. The missile segment enhancement is a U.S.-funded effort to improve on the current PAC-3 missile capability. Program estimates indicate that the Army plans to develop and procure missiles at a cost of approximately $6.1 billion. We did not assess the missile and the missile segment enhancement, and the associated costs are not included in our funding information.

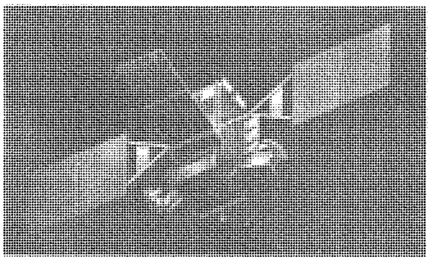
The MEADS program has adopted an incremental acquisition approach wherein MEADS major items are incrementally inserted into the current Patriot force. The first of the three insertions is to begin in 2008, with another in 2010, and the final in 2013. The program office plans for each increment to introduce new or upgraded capability into the program. The 2008 and 2010 increments are under review as the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the U.S. Army consider the means to consolidate and align multiple Air and Missile Defense command and control development efforts. The Army's objective is to provide a joint integrated network-centric architecture for common Battle Management Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence. The 2013 increment is not effected by the potential realignment and the Army expects MEADS to achieve initial operating capability in 2017 with four units.

Agency Comments

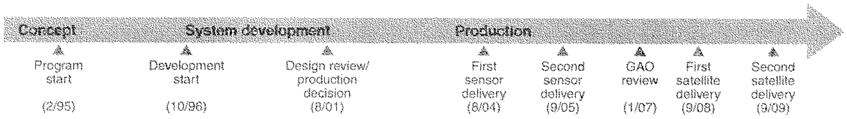
The Army concurred with this assessment.

Space Based Infrared System (SBIRS) High

The Air Force's SBIRS High program is a satellite system intended to meet requirements in the missile warning, missile defense, technical intelligence, and battlespace characterization missions. A replacement for the Defense Support Program, SBIRS High was to consist of four satellites (plus a spare) in geosynchronous earth orbit (GEO), two sensors on host satellites in highly elliptical orbit (HEO), and fixed and mobile ground stations. In 2005, the number of GEO satellites was reduced to three. We assessed the sensors and satellites.



Source: Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (2/95)
Development start (10/96)
Design review/ production decision (8/01)
First sensor delivery (8/04)
Second sensor delivery (9/05)
GAO review (1/07)
First satellite delivery (9/08)
Second satellite delivery (9/09)

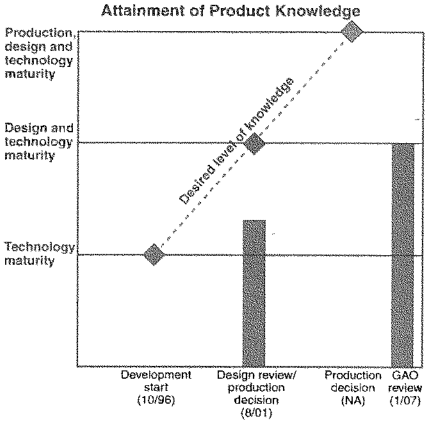
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The SBIRS High program's critical technologies and design are now mature. Production maturity could not be determined because the contractor does not collect production statistical process control data. After delays of 18 and 21 months, both HEO sensors have now been delivered. According to program officials, early HEO 1 sensor performance on-orbit confirms the sufficiency of the payload design and workmanship. In 2005, the program incurred two Nunn-McCurdy (10 U.S.C. 2433) unit cost breaches and made a decision not to buy two satellites. Although program officials acknowledge that the GEO satellites are orders of magnitude more complex than the HEO sensors, they believe a more realistic program schedule has been developed. The first GEO satellite delivery is scheduled for late 2008.



SBIRS High Program

Technology Maturity

The SBIRS High program's three critical technologies—the infrared sensor, thermal management, and onboard processor—are mature. However, program officials stated that flawed initial systems engineering created first-time integration and test risk associated with the complex GEO satellite. According to program officials, early test results of the scanning and staring sensors are positive. The staring sensor is to have the ability to stare at one earth location and then rapidly change its focus area, representing a significant leap in capability over the current system.

Design Stability and Production Maturity

The program's design is considered stable since almost all drawings have been released, but design-related problems may arise. Design problems led to delayed delivery of both HEO sensors, which were accepted for operations without meeting all program specifications. Given the greater complexity of the GEO satellites over the HEO sensors, the probability is high that major design flaws will be discovered on the GEO satellites as well.

Program officials are using 10 milestones to indicate progress. Four have been completed so far. Key events remaining include delivery of flight software to support the payload testing, payload delivery, ground software deliveries, and system ground connectivity tests.

Although the contractor does not collect statistical process control data, the program office tracks and assesses production maturity through detailed monthly test data and updates. According to program officials, about 95 percent of flight hardware for the first GEO satellite and 85 percent for the second have been delivered. Some testing is complete for the first GEO satellite, including the payload engineering thermal-vacuum test and testing to verify that the spacecraft will operate as intended in conditions comparable to those it will encounter on-orbit.

Other Program Issues

Given the high probability of design flaws, costly redesigns that further delay GEO delivery are possible. According to program officials, tests have been added to identify design issues and reduce the likelihood of significant schedule impacts. The program office has identified four focus areas that are most likely to impact the program, including flight software development and test, database development, resource contention between ground operations and software test and development, and human error in manufacturing.

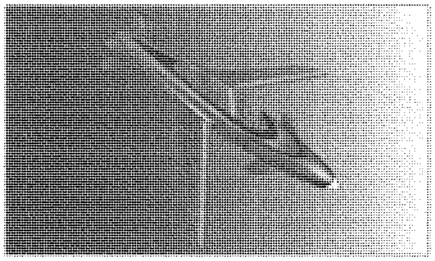
In July 2005, the program reported its third and fourth Nunn-McCurdy unit cost breaches (10 U.S.C. 2433). As part of the mandatory program certification process, the program was restructured in late 2005. The resulting Acquisition Decision Memorandum certified the program to complete the GEO 1 and 2 development activity and allowed for the option to procure one additional GEO satellite. In December 2005, the Air Force was directed to begin efforts to develop a viable competing capability in parallel with the SBIRS program, known as the Alternative Infrared Satellite System (AIRSS). The Air Force recently awarded contracts to Raytheon and SAIC for sensor assembly development for AIRSS. AIRSS is being designed in part to provide an alternative to the SBIRS GEO 3 satellite.

Agency Comments

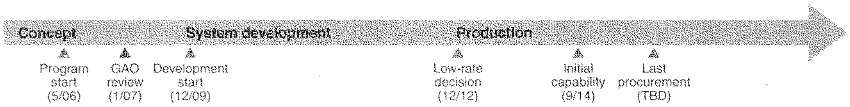
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Air Force stated that the GEO payload and spacecraft have successfully completed several risk reduction activities and appear mature and stable. It noted however, that if unforeseen difficulties arise during the GEO integration and test sequence, current direction from the Office of the Secretary of Defense is to maintain schedule, even at the sacrifice of performance. The Air Force stated that in the interest of preserving schedule, it may delay full capability. The Air Force expects GEO 1 payload delivery in the summer of 2007 for integration with the spacecraft bus. It further noted that integrated system test activities will be the focus of GEO 1 efforts in 2008, with the first GEO satellite launch anticipated late that year. The Air Force expects that the GEO 2 payload and bus will undergo integration and test activities in 2008 in anticipation of a launch in late 2009. Technical comments were provided and incorporated as necessary.

Small Diameter Bomb (SDB), Increment II

The Air Force's Small Diameter Bomb Increment II will provide the capability to attack mobile targets from stand-off range in adverse weather. The program builds on a previous increment that provided capability against fixed targets. SDB II will also provide capability for multiple kills per pass, multiple ordnance carriage, near-precision munitions, and reduced munitions footprint. The weapon will be installed on the Air Force's F-15E and the Navy's Joint Strike Fighter and is designed to work with other aircraft, such as the F-22A and B-1.



Source: SDB II Program Office.



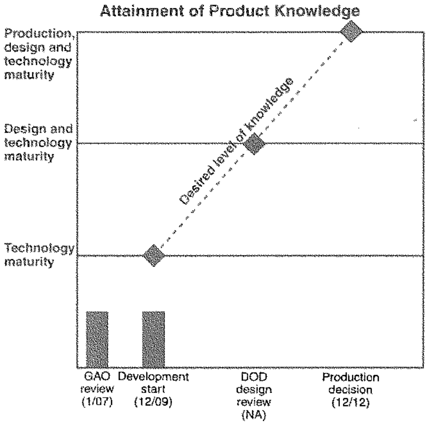
Program Essentials
Prime contractor: Boeing, Raytheon
Program office: Eglin AFB, FL
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of NA	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	NA	[illegible]	NA
Procurement cost	NA	[illegible]	NA
Total program cost	NA	[illegible]	NA
Program unit cost	NA	TBD	NA
Total quantities	NA	[illegible]	NA
Acquisition cycle time (months)	NA	[illegible]	NA

[illegible]

Two of SDB II's five critical technologies are mature and are currently in use on the SDB I program. The remaining technologies are expected to be nearly mature by development start in December 2009. SDB II awarded two risk reduction phase contracts to Boeing and Raytheon in May 2006. The risk reduction phase will last 42 months, at the end of which Boeing and Raytheon will compete for the system development and demonstration contract to be awarded in December 2009. The risk reduction approach is said to allow higher risk and less mature technologies to be fielded in an evolutionary fashion. First SDB II delivery is expected in 2014.



SDB II Program

Technology Maturity

Two of the five critical technologies—the airframe and the guidance and control system—are considered mature. These two technologies were leveraged from legacy Air Force and Navy weapons. Three others, the multi-mode seeker, net-ready data link, and payload (warhead and fuze) need further development. The seeker is currently the least mature, and according to program officials, will be the most challenging technology to demonstrate due to the complexity of the algorithms it will require and the need to package the multimode seeker into a small volume. The program expects that each critical technology will be mature or approaching full maturity when the program begins system development and demonstration in December 2009.

According to program officials, the strategy for maturing these technologies is to "test early, test often," using modeling and simulation techniques, and relying on other programs that have used the same or similar technologies. Each contractor will conduct these activities separately. At the down select point, the program plans to evaluate the contractors on the level of technology maturity they achieved during the risk reduction phase.

Other Program Issues

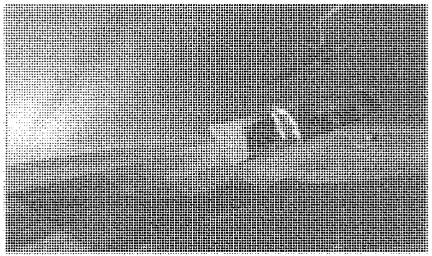
The government plans to procure the SDB II based on contractor-developed and government-approved system performance specifications, which will become contractually binding at down select in 2009. The contractor will be accountable for system performance. Accordingly, the contractor is responsible not only for the design of the weapon system, but also for planning the developmental test and evaluation program to verify the system performance. The government will assess the contractor's verification efforts for adequacy before three major decision points: award of low-rate production contract, declaration that the system is ready for dedicated operational test, and award of full-rate production after the beyond low rate production assessment.

Agency Comments

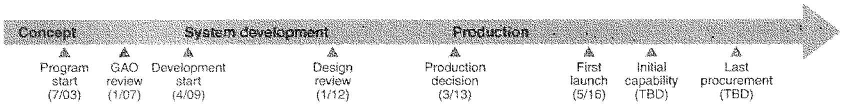
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Air Force concurred with the information presented and provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Space Radar (SR)

SR is an Air Force-led, joint DOD and intelligence community program to develop a satellite system to provide persistent, all-weather, day and night surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities in denied areas. As envisioned, SR would generate volumes of radar imagery data for transmission to ground-, air-, ship-, and space-based systems. We assessed the space segment.



Source: Space Radar Integrated Program Office.

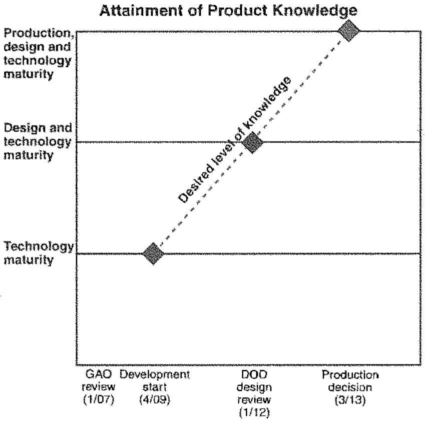

Concept
System development
Production
Program start (7/03)
GAO review (1/07)
Development start (4/09)
Design review (1/12)
Production decision (3/13)
First launch (5/16)
Initial capability (TBD)
Last procurement (TBD)

Program Essentials
Prime contractor: Lockheed Martin Space Systems Co., Northrop Grumman Space and Mission Systems Corp.
Program office: Chantilly, Va.
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	22	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	TBD	TBD	TBD

Five critical technologies will support the SR program, and they are still being matured. The program office is focusing its efforts on technology risk reduction and concept definition activities. The Air Force has made several changes to the acquisition approach, including schedule and cost changes, to address concerns about the affordability of SR. The program also recently revised its development start date from the last quarter of 2008 to the third quarter of 2009, an 8-month extension. Launch of the first fully operational SR satellite is scheduled for fiscal year 2016. Design and production maturity could not be assessed because SR has not begun product development.



SR Program

Technology Maturity

The program office recently revised its critical technologies. It assessed the integrated radio frequency assembly, advanced analog/digital converters, surface moving target indication processing algorithms, open ocean surveillance processing algorithms, and low earth orbit laser communication terminals as the critical technologies needing further development. The program office also stated that critical technology identification is an ongoing process and that technologies could be removed or additional technologies could be added as studies, requirements, and performance analyses are further refined. The program office expects almost all of the technologies to be mature when it begins the product development phase.

Other Program Issues

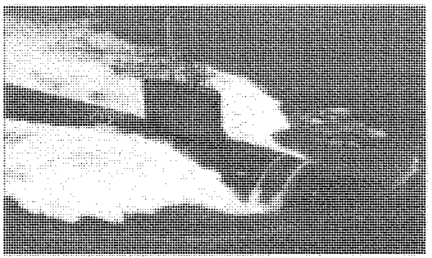
For fiscal year 2007, the Appropriations Conferees reduced the program's requested budget by $80 million. DOD and other SR users have created a new path for developing a single space radar system to meet user needs. As a result, the Air Force has restructured the program and is evaluating the SR schedule and associated costs. The new path includes several changes to the SR acquisition approach. First, in early 2005, a new Space Radar Integrated Program Office was established in Chantilly, Virginia, to work more closely with the intelligence community, DOD and other users, senior Air Force leadership, and the Congress. Second, the new SR senior leadership established a framework with overarching guidance for maturing the critical technologies, emphasizing use of more mature and less risky technology in a block development approach. For example, the program office recently employed this approach by deferring high-risk technologies, such as onboard processing and more advanced solar cells and batteries, from the first block of satellites to be developed. The program office plans to incorporate these technologies as they mature. Third, a team of program office personnel and mission partners established a new plan to drive fiscal year 2006 risk reduction activities and revised cost estimates. Finally, the SR development approach reduced the total number of satellites to be acquired from 22 to 10. While this reduction decreases recurring costs, it does not decrease research and development costs. In fact, with the decrease in total quantity, research and development costs are amortized over fewer satellites, resulting in an increase in the average unit cost. While DOD and the intelligence community in January 2005 committed to pursue a single space radar capability, a cost-share agreement between DOD and the intelligence community for this effort has yet to be established.

Agency Comments

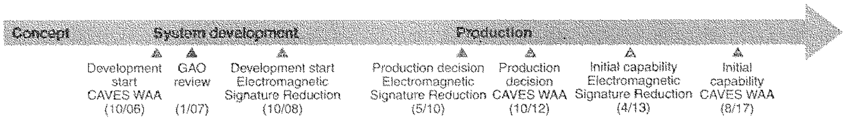
In commenting on a draft of this report, the Air Force stated that it is still coordinating plans for demonstrating the maturity of one technology (advanced analog/digital converters). It has established an initial test program but needs to resolve whether or not testing is required at a higher level of assembly to meet the standard for demonstrating technology maturity. In any case, the program office intends to demonstrate adequate maturity for all critical technologies before it begins the product development phase.

SSN 774 Technology Insertion Program

The Navy is seeking to enhance the performance and lower the cost of the Virginia class submarine by inserting new technologies, like those for electromagnetic signature reduction and sensors for CAVES WAA, and improving its production processes and design. The Navy seeks to lower the cost of two submarines per year to $2 billion each (2005 dollars) by 2012, a reduction of about $400 million. We assessed the maturity of the technologies planned for insertion, and discuss some of the design and production improvements.



Source: Northrop Grumman Newport News.


Concept
System development
Production
Development start CAVES WAA (10/06)
GAO review (1/07)
Development start Electromagnetic Signature Reduction (10/08)
Production decision Electromagnetic Signature Reduction (5/10)
Production decision CAVES WAA (10/12)
Initial capability Electromagnetic Signature Reduction (4/13)
Initial capability CAVES WAA (8/17)

Program Essentials

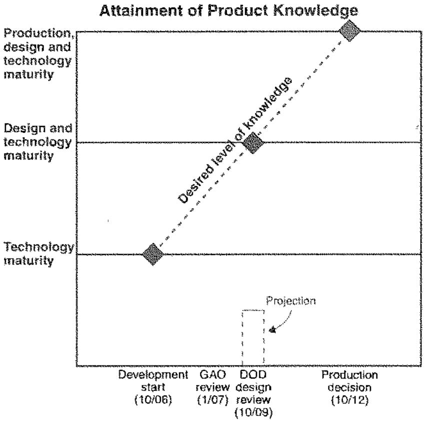
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

The program office identified three critical technologies for insertion into the Virginia-class submarine beginning in 2010, including one software package for electromagnetic signature reduction and two technologies for sensor arrays. Development start for the array technologies occurred in October 2006, while development start for software will occur in October 2008. Currently all three technologies are immature. The achievement of key product knowledge shown is for the sensor technologies. Prior to 2010 the program office is making additional changes to the submarine's design and production processes to reduce cost or enhance capabilities. According to program officials, one of these changes, the introduction of the advanced sail, was recently deferred from 2009 to 2014.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



SSN 774 Tech Insertion Program

Technology Maturity

The Virginia class submarine program is developing three new technologies for insertion into submarines beginning in 2010. The first of these is a software package containing improved algorithms to monitor and, if necessary, reduce the submarine's electromagnetic signature. This software will be installed in submarines under construction in 2010 and 2011, SSN-781 through SSN-786, as well as all future submarines. Program officials state that after the software is installed, at-sea testing and calibration are required to ensure full functionality. Similar software has been demonstrated in British submarines, but due to alterations and additional testing needed for use with Virginia-class submarines, the software is considered immature. The other two technologies selected for insertion will be integrated to form the conformal acoustic velocity sensor wide aperture array (CAVES WAA), a sensor designed to replace existing systems and lower the cost of construction while maintaining or improving performance. The two technologies, fiber optic sensors and the integrated panels that contain the sensors and manage their signature, are both immature. Currently rough models of both technologies are being tested in a laboratory environment. If the fiber optic sensors do not develop as expected, a more mature ceramic sensor may be used to preserve cost savings and performance. If both technologies encounter difficulties in development, the program will continue to use the existing systems.

Design Stability

While the program office will track the stability of design for these new technologies, it will use metrics other than the engineering drawings. In addition to these new technologies, the program office will introduce a series of design changes beginning with the submarine authorized for construction in 2008. Redesign could include anything from new lighting systems to replacing the front section of the submarine. The program office is also investigating replacing some hydraulic systems with lower-cost electric systems and simplifying other components like the propulsion lubrication system. Eventually the program office hopes to achieve savings of $100 million per submarine by 2012 through changes to technology and design.

According to program officials, one of these design changes, the introduction of the advanced sail, was recently deferred from 2009 until 2014 to allow further design development and risk reduction. Near term funding for this effort has been reallocated to take advantage of other cost reduction opportunities. When implemented, this design change will replace the existing sail, the structure that sits atop the main body of the submarine, with one that provides expanded space for sensor systems or equipment for special forces teams. The advanced sail will be constructed of composite materials whose feasibility has already been demonstrated under a separate development program.

Other Program Issues

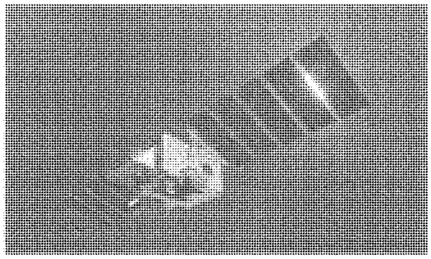
The Navy is also attempting to reduce cost in the Virginia-class submarine program by improving production processes. The program office seeks to reduce construction time by up to 24 months through improvements to construction efficiency. Some of the methods proposed include increasing the size and weight of the sections of the submarine while decreasing the number of sections produced, installing more equipment in the sections prior to assembling them, and performing hull treatments prior to delivery. These changes will be assisted by the construction of new, more efficient equipment and facilities at the shipyards, an initiative funded by the Navy and enabled by contract incentives. The Navy anticipates per-submarine savings of $65 million to $110 million through these initiatives, but acknowledges the significant increase in maturity of construction processes required to achieve these savings.

Agency Comments

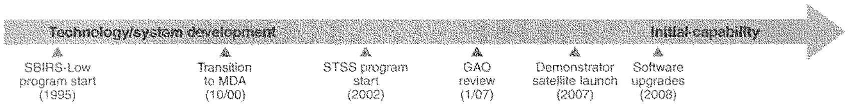
The Navy provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Space Tracking and Surveillance System (STSS)

MDA's STSS element is being developed in incremental, capability-based blocks designed to track enemy missiles throughout their flight. The initial increment is composed of two demonstration satellites built under the Space Based Infrared System Low program. MDA plans to launch these satellites in 2007 to assess how well they work within the context of the missile defense system. MDA is also studying improvements to the STSS program, and it will be building next-generation satellites. We assessed the two demonstration satellites.



Source: STSS Program Brief.


Technology/system development
Initial capability
SBIRS-Low program start (1995)
Transition to MDA (10/00)
STSS program start (2002)
GAO review (1/07)
Demonstrator satellite launch (2007)
Software upgrades (2008)

Program Essentials

[illegible]

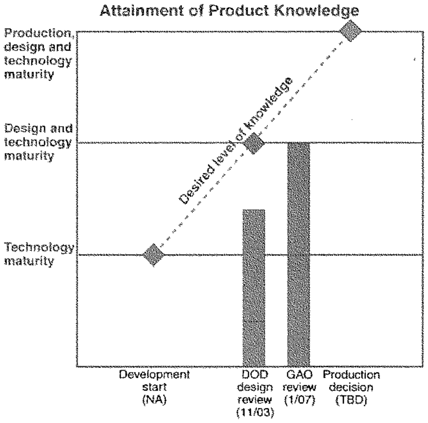
Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	NA	NA	NA
Total quantities	NA	NA	NA
Acquisition cycle time (months)	NA	NA	NA

[illegible]

All of the STSS program's five critical technologies are mature. The STSS design appears otherwise stable, with all drawings released to manufacturing. Both satellites' acquisition and tracking sensors, which are the satellites' payloads, were delivered in 2006. However, continuing quality and workmanship problems with the first satellite's payload as well as space vehicle integration and test issues, according to MDA, caused the contractor to overrun its fiscal year 2006 budget and experience schedule delays. This and a funding reduction have caused a 5-month slip in the launch date for the demonstration satellites. The launch is now scheduled for December 2007.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



STSS Program

Technology Maturity

All five critical technologies—satellite communication cross-links, onboard processor, acquisition sensor, track sensor, and the single-stage cryocooler—are mature. The last two technologies—track sensor and the single-stage cryocooler—reached maturity when the thermal vacuum testing on the first satellite's payload was completed in February 2006.

Design Stability

The STSS program's design is stable, with all drawings released to manufacturing. When the STSS program started in 2002, design drawings and the satellite components for the partially built satellites from the Space Based Infrared System Low effort were released to manufacturing. By the time STSS went through its design review in November 2003, the program office had released all subsequent design drawings.

Other Program Issues

The payload for the first satellite was delivered on February 28, 2006, and has been integrated onto the satellite. The second satellite's payload completed thermal vacuum testing and was delivered on December 19, 2006. The payload was supposed to be delivered in August 2006, but an issue surfaced with higher than expected friction on the elevation gimbal that restricted movement of the track sensor to above-the-horizon viewing. This was resolved and a full range of motion was demonstrated in a thermal vacuum test. The STSS ground segment activities have progressed well. The first part of the ground acceptance test was successfully completed, and the last part is expected to be conducted in January 2007. In addition, the ground segment operations and training-related materials have been turned over to system test personnel.

The program experienced quality and workmanship problems with its payload subcontractor over the past several years, particularly with the first satellite's payload. More recently, the prime contractor tightened its inspection and supervision of the subcontractor's processes, and an education effort was undertaken to ensure that all personnel on the program knew and understood the program instructions. The subcontractor's performance with respect to the payload for the second satellite improved significantly as a result of these more recent actions.

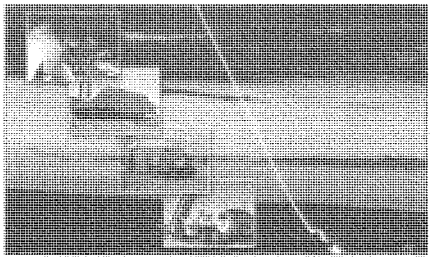
The program office is in the process of negotiating a contract change that will move the contract launch date from July 2007 to December 2007. There are two reasons for the change in contract and forecast launch date. First, the program office directed additional testing of the first satellite's track sensor and a second thermal vacuum test of its payload because the test data from the original tests were ambiguous. The tests added a couple of months to the program schedule. Second, MDA received a $200 million funding cut that placed the STSS program under tight financial restrictions in fiscal year 2006, allowing no funds for contingencies and forcing the program office to push some work into fiscal year 2007. The program was unable to shift the deferred work into fiscal year 2007 and still make the July 2007 launch date. Thus, the program office expects that the two demonstration satellites will be launched in December 2007.

Agency Comments

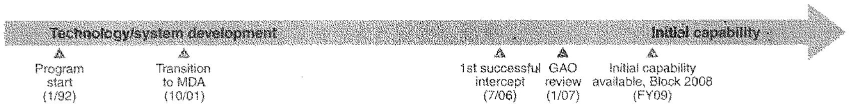
MDA provided technical comments on a draft of this assessment, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD)

MDA's THAAD element is being developed in incremental, capability-based blocks to provide a ground-based missile defense system able to defend against short- and medium-range ballistic missile attacks. THAAD will include missiles, a launcher, an X-band radar, and a fire control and communications system. We assessed the design for the Block 2008 initial capability of one fire unit that MDA plans to hand off to the Army in fiscal year 2009 for limited operational use.



Source: THAAD Project Office.


Technology/system development
Initial capability
Program start (1/92)
Transition to MDA (10/01)
1st successful intercept (7/06)
GAO review (1/07)
Initial capability available, Block 2008 (FY09)

Program Essentials

Prime contractor: Lockheed Martin
Program office: Huntsville, AL
Funding FY07-FY11:
R&D: [illegible]
Procurement: [illegible]
Total funding: [illegible]
Procurement quantity: NA

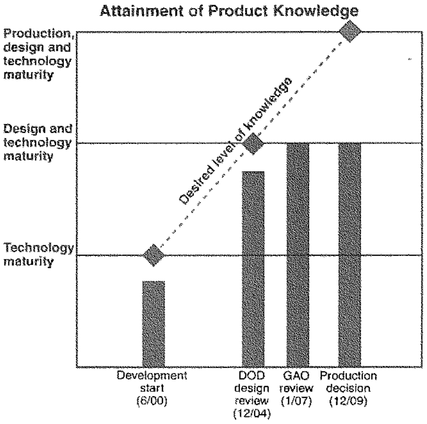
Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	NA	NA	NA
Total quantities	NA	NA	NA
Acquisition cycle time (months)	NA	NA	NA

[illegible]

Program officials assessed THAAD's technologies as mature and its design as generally stable, with 93 percent of its design drawings released. During Block 2006, the program is continuing to mature THAAD's design and expects to deliver a limited operational capability during Block 2008. In fiscal year 2006, the program successfully conducted three of five scheduled tests. One of the tests that was not successfully completed was Flight Test 4. During this test, the target malfunctioned, causing program officials to call this a "no test." The program does not plan to conduct this test at a later date. Rather, the objectives of this test will be rolled into a later flight test, allowing the program to gain the knowledge, but at a later date.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



THAAD Program

Technology Maturity

Program officials assessed all of THAAD's critical technologies as mature. All of these technologies are included in four major components: the fire control and communications component; the interceptor; the launcher; and the radar.

Program officials made changes in the execution of the THAAD program that allowed it to make progress in maturing critical technologies. Officials placed more emphasis on risk reduction efforts, including adopting technology readiness levels to assess technological maturity.

Design Stability

THAAD's basic design is nearing completion with approximately 93 percent of the 13,010 drawings expected to be available at the start of production. The number of drawings increased from the approximately 9,850 reported last year primarily due to design changes that testing identified as being needed.

Production Maturity

We did not assess THAAD's production maturity because the program is only delivering test units until fiscal year 2009. MDA plans to purchase two fire units while simultaneously conducting developmental activities. The first will be delivered in fiscal year 2009, with a second expected to become available during fiscal year 2010. Prior to a production decision, the program office plans to assess production maturity using risk assessments and verification reviews for assurance of the contractor's readiness to proceed with repeatable processes and quality.

Other Program Issues

THAAD officials expected to complete five flight tests prior to the end of fiscal year 2006 but were only able to conduct four tests. During flight tests 1 and 2 program officials demonstrated missile performance, divert attitude control system operations, and kill vehicle control. While conducting integrated system flight test 3, the seeker demonstrated the ability to locate a target in the high endo-atmosphere—the primary objective of the test—and successfully intercepted a target. During flight test 4—which was scheduled to be the program's first objective intercept attempt—the target malfunctioned shortly after launch and forced program officials to destroy the target. As a result of the malfunction, program officials were forced to declare flight test 4 a "no-test." Program officials are planning to add the objectives from flight test 4 into a later flight test, which will allow them to gain the knowledge they initally planned on receiving from this test at a later date.

Additionally, hardware issues and technical problems are causing the program's prime contractor to experience negative cost and schedule variances. The variances can primarily be attributed to the missile, launcher, and THAAD fire control and communications components. As of September 30, 2006 the THAAD program was behind schedule in completing $38.2 million of fiscal year 2006 work and overrunning its fiscal year 2006 cost budget by $89.2 million.

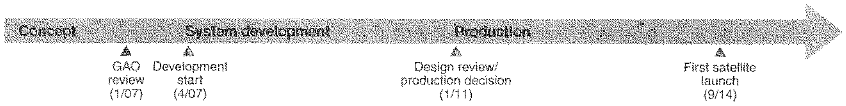
Agency Comments

MDA provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Transformational Satellite Communications System (TSAT)

The Air Force's TSAT system is the spaceborne element of the Global Information Grid that will provide high data rate military satellite communications services to DOD users. The system is designed to provide survivable, jam-resistant, global, secure, and general-purpose radio frequency and laser cross-links with other air and space systems. The TSAT system will consist of a constellation of five satellites, plus a sixth satellite to ensure mission availability. We assessed the six satellites.

Source: TSAT Program Office.



Program Essentials

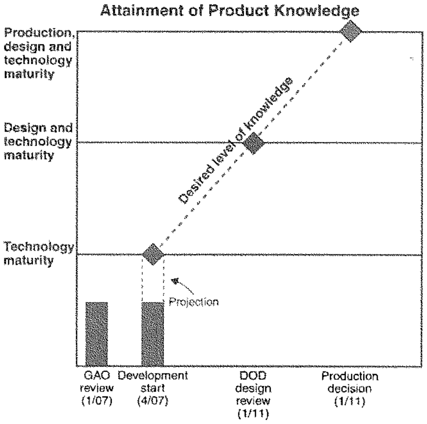
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

Since our last assessment, DOD rescinded the approval to begin preliminary design activities and restructured the TSAT program strategy to align program activity with the December 2004 National Security Space Acquisition Policy 03-01 into an incremental development approach. Each increment will incorporate available mature technology to lower program risk and improve confidence in launching TSAT satellites according to schedule. DOD also directed the Air Force to ensure that all critical technologies are mature and Systems Design Review is complete prior to seeking preliminary design development approval for the space segment. According to program officials, a new acquisition strategy is being developed, which will result in a new program baseline.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



TSAT Program

Technology Maturity

In June 2006, DOD rescinded the prior approval for TSAT to enter the preliminary design phase to align the program with current national security space acquisition policy. The program is now in the concept development phase. Currently, four of the program's seven technologies are mature.

Of the seven technologies, four technologies—packet processing payload, communication-on-the-move antenna, information assurance space for internet protocol encryption and information-assurance for transmission security—are mature. The other three—dynamic bandwidth and resource allocation, protected bandwidth efficient modulation waveforms, and single access laser communication—are scheduled to reach maturity before development start, currently scheduled for April 2007. All of the technologies are needed to be mature prior to entering the preliminary design phase again.

The wide-field of view multi-access laser communication technology was part of the original TSAT baseline program. However, it is no longer part of the baseline due to the lower risk incremental approach. The program is currently budgeting $16.7 million for maturation of this technology which could be inserted into future increments, according to the program office.

Other Program Issues

According to program officials, the TSAT program has spent about $1 billion to date. However, given that the program is in the concept development phase, information on cost, design stability, production maturity, or software development for satellite production is not yet available. According to DOD officials, a request for proposals for the space segment is expected to be released in May 2007, and the contract is expected to be awarded in December 2007.

The program awarded a contract in January 2006 to develop the TSAT Mission Operations System (TMOS) that will provide network management, and to develop the overall network architecture. The program awarded this contract first to allow the competing space contractors to focus their satellite designs on a single architecture and mission operations system, thereby reducing program complexity. According to the TSAT program office, TMOS will include software development that will take place in four increments, with a projected 5.2 million total lines of code in the final system.

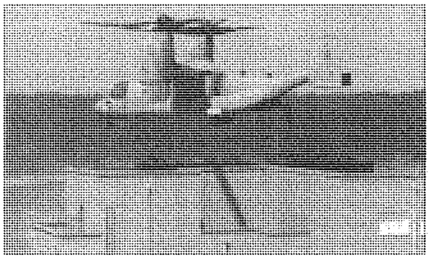
The June 2004 program baseline showed a first satellite launch scheduled for October 2011. The date was later moved to October 2013, and then to September 2014, due to TSAT appropriations reductions in fiscal years 2005 and 2006, according to the program office. Congress made these reductions due to concerns about the maturity of critical technologies and an aggressive acquisition schedule. Congress continues to express concerns about the program. For fiscal year 2007, the Appropriations conferees reduced the program's requested budget by $130 million. According to the program office, the initial launch date is now October 2014 due to the latest reduction. While encouraged by changes to the program's acquisition strategy, the Senate Appropriations Committee noted that even with reduced funding, the program budget was still significantly higher than the prior year. The committee stated that excessive cost growth across a short time span facilitates inefficiencies that can create future program management and cost overrun problems.

Agency Comments

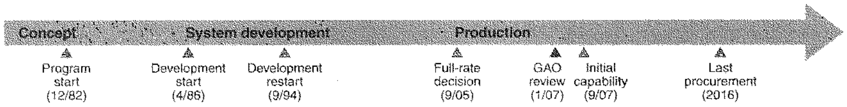
The Air Force provided technical comments to a draft of this assessment, which were incorporated as appropriate.

V-22 Joint Services Advanced Vertical Lift Aircraft

The V-22 Osprey is a tilt rotor aircraft developed by the Navy for Marine Corps, Air Force, and Navy use. As of fiscal year 2006, 85 Marine Corps MV-22s and 7 Air Force CV-22s were procured. The MV-22 will replace the Marine Corps CH-46E and CH-53D helicopters. There currently are two versions of the MV-22, the Block A, which incorporates safety-related changes, and Block B, which is built upon the Block A to provide enhanced maintainability. We assessed Block A but have comments concerning Block B, the version that will be deployed.



Source: V-22 Joint Program Office.


Concept
System development
Production
Program start (12/82)
Development start (4/86)
Development restart (9/94)
Full-rate decision (9/05)
GAO review (1/07)
Initial capability (9/07)
Last procurement (2016)

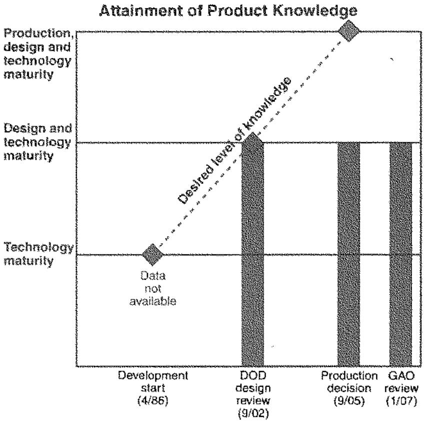
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

While the design of Block A is considered stable, Block A will not be deployed in combat. Design stability of Block B—the deployed configuration—will be better known after its limited operational assessment in late 2007. Design changes are possible in order to address any deficiencies identified during this test and those identified during prior Block A tests as well as to lower production costs, and to field future upgrades. Fuselage structural design changes are possible if improved troop seat crash retention capability is directed. The current budget reinstated a funding shortfall from last year's budget submittal, and as a result, adequate funding to fully procure 185 aircraft exists. However, a bearing defect has been found in some critical assemblies of production aircraft and is being addressed.



V-22 Program

Design Stability

The design of the MV-22 Block A is considered stable and mature. The Block B version, which will be the deployed version, is built upon the Block A to provide enhanced maintainability. Its maturity will be better known after operational tests planned prior to its initial operational capability in September 2007. Further design changes to Block B may be needed to address deficiencies identified during this assessment and the 2005 operational tests of Block A, to lower the production cost, and to field future upgrades.

The Navy desires to increase the crashworthiness capability of the troop seat and fuselage structure above the current specification requirements. A new improved troop seat has been purchased for the V-22 aircraft, a medium risk has been accepted for the new troop seat installation with the current fuselage structure, and the program is evaluating engineering change alternatives to add crashworthiness capability to the fuselage structure to further enhance crashworthiness capability. Improved troop seats may, in some crash conditions, impart higher loads into the airframe than originally intended due to new higher qualification standards.

According to program officials, engineering change proposals may be used to lower unit recurring flyaway cost to a level contractors believe is needed to generate foreign military sales of the aircraft. The government has invested and intends additional investments in cost reduction. At an initial meeting program officials stated that on cost type contracts most engineering change proposals are usually done at the government's expense even if the change is within the scope of the contract. However, when providing written technical comments the program office stated that the contractor has made and continues to make corporate investments as well to drive recurring flyaway costs down.

Production Maturity

We could not assess production maturity because statistical process control data were not available. In September 2005, DOD approved the V-22 for full-rate production after conducting a production readiness review. The review identified program management, production engineering and planning, and material and procured parts as high-risk areas requiring intense management attention. A number of initiatives were proposed to reduce these risks including the approval of a multi-year procurement contract in order to achieve a low product cost—one of the components of the high program management risk areas. Congress recently authorized the program to enter into a multiyear procurement contract. Initially program officials did not believe they could buy the number of aircraft proposed in the multi-year justification because of a reduction in program funding levels. This reduction was the result of the milestone decision authority adopting a lower independent cost estimate than the program estimate. However, according to the Navy, the current budget reinstated the funding shorfall from last year's budget submittal and adequate funding exists to fully procure the 185 aircraft in the multiyear buy.

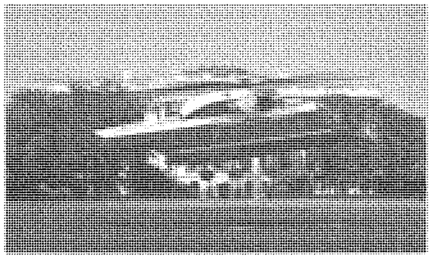
Production aircraft continue to be accepted with numerous deviations and waivers. Program officials stated that this practice will continue due to the time needed to address these items. Analysis of the acceptance documentation for the latest three aircraft delivered before November 2006, revealed several potentially serious defects such as the aircraft being conditionally accepted with bearing assemblies that contain a thin dense chrome plating/coating that did not meet contract requirements for two assemblies inside the proprotor gearbox. One of these assemblies is in a critical area. Program officials state that this deficiency has been addressed by (1) stripping chrome plating from bearings and replating in accordance with improved manufacturing processes, and (2) qualifying newly manufactured bearings for use without the chrome plating. Program officials state that these bearing assemblies may not meet the contract requirements in two critical assemblies.

Agency Comments

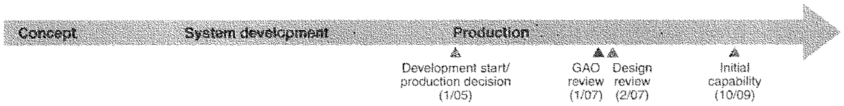
In commenting on a draft of this report, the Navy provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

VH-71 Presidential Helicopter Replacement Program

The Navy's VH-71 will be a dual-piloted, multi-engine, helicopter employed by Marine Helicopter Squadron One to provide safe, reliable, and timely transportation for the President and Vice President of the United States, heads of state, and others in varied and at times adverse climatic and weather conditions. When the President is aboard, the VH-71 will serve as the Commander in Chief's primary command and control platform. The system will replace the VH-3D and VH-60N. It will be developed in two increments. We assessed increment one.



Source: Presidential Helicopters Program Office.



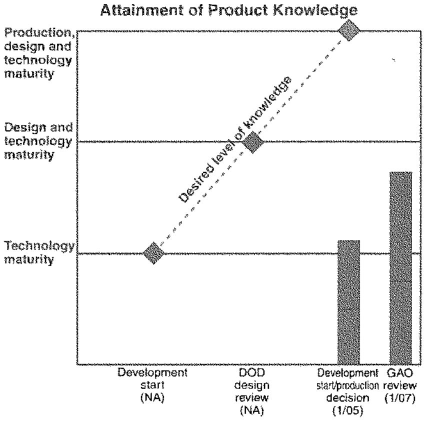
Program Essentials
Prime contractor: Lockheed Martin Systems Integration
Program office: Patuxent River, MD
Funding needed to complete:
R&D: $[illegible] million
Procurement: $[illegible] million
Total funding: $[illegible] million
Procurement quantity: [illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of NA	Latest 12/2006	Percent change
Research and development cost	NA	$[illegible]	NA
Procurement cost	NA	$[illegible]	NA
Total program cost	NA	$[illegible]	NA
Program unit cost	NA	$[illegible]	NA
Total quantities	NA	23	NA
Acquisition cycle time (months)	NA	57	NA

[illegible]

In January 2005, the VH-71 program began system development and committed to production without fully maturing technologies, achieving design stability, or demonstrating production maturity due to an aggressive high-risk schedule driven by White House needs. The program is approaching technology maturity and design stability for increment one. However, this design may not be useable to meet increment two performance requirements. The range requirement in the prime contract was reduced because the estimated weight of the aircraft is over 1,200 pounds more than the original limit. The program is also reassessing the requirements for increment two and considering cost, schedule, and performance trade-offs because the current program may not be executable. Concurrency in development, design, and production continues to put the program at risk for cost growth and schedule delays.



VH-71 Program

Technology Maturity

The VH-71 program's two critical technologies were nearing maturity when the program began development and committed to production in January 2005. Since then, one of those technologies, the 10-inch cockpit control displays, matured. A prototype of the other critical technology, the Communication and Subsystem Processing Embedded Resource Communications Controller, is not projected to be demonstrated in a realistic environment until 2007. The program's design review and ongoing technology readiness assessment efforts identified no significant technology risk for increment one. The critical technologies for increment two have not been identified. The program is reassessing the requirements for increment two and considering cost, schedule, and performance trade-offs because it may not be affordable and executable within the current program schedule.

Design Stability and Production Maturity

In January 2005, the VH-71 program committed to the production of five aircraft without a final design or fully defined production processes. The program's August 2006 design review was held ten months later than planned and did not meet the Navy's criteria for a successful system-level review. An additional design review is planned for February 2007. In August 2006, 87 percent of the program's drawings were releasable to manufacturing with the remaining drawings primarily related to installation. The program obtained customer agreement to reduce the range requirement in the prime contract and is working to stabilize the weight of the aircraft. The program also obtained customer agreement to defer several other requirements to increment two, including those related to the auxiliary power unit and rotor track and balance technology.

Concurrency in development, design, and production continues to drive the risk of cost growth and schedule delays on the program. Design development will continue through low-rate initial production as the program concurrently develops its manufacturing processes, increasing the likelihood that components being procured may have to be reworked to meet the final design. The program will not collect statistical process control data to demonstrate production maturity, but it will monitor indicators, such as number of non-conforming products, quality notifications, hours per process, and scrap and rework rates.

Other Program Issues

Program officials told us that the five increment one aircraft will have a limited service life and its design may not be usable for increment two. Changes to the main gear box, drive train, engines, tail unit, and main rotor blades are required to meet increment two performance requirements. Program officials anticipate that five additional increment two aircraft will be produced to support full operational capability in 2015 rather than modifying increment one aircraft to the increment two configuration. This scenario is included in the program's overall cost.

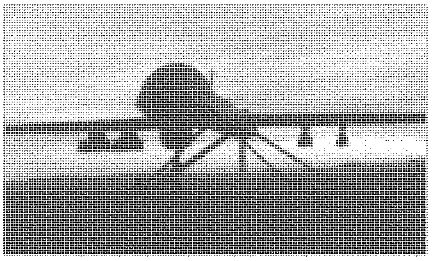
Earned value data show a potential increase of $341 million or 18 percent, in the estimated cost to complete the current prime contract. While the program indicates that this increase is supported by its current budget, there is the potential for future program cost increases as the program reexamines requirements, schedules, and costs for increment two. The magnitude of any cost increase will likely not be known until after DOD's 2008 budget is submitted.

Agency Comments

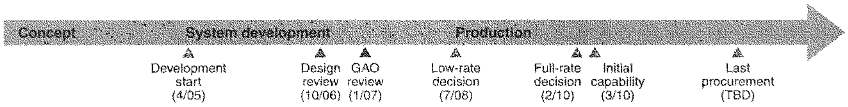
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Navy concurred with the information provided in this report.

Warrior Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS)

The Army expects its Extended Range Multi-Purpose Unmanned Aircraft System, Warrior, to fill what it terms a capability gap for an unmanned aircraft system at the division level. A Warrior system will include 12 aircraft, ground control stations, ground and air data terminals, automatic take-off and landing systems, and ground support equipment. The Army plans for Warrior to operate alone or with other platforms such as the Apache helicopter and perform missions including reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition and attack.



Source: UAVS Project Office.


Concept
System development
Production
Development start (4/05)
Design review (10/06)
GAO review (1/07)
Low-rate decision (7/08)
Full-rate decision (2/10)
Initial capability (3/10)
Last procurement (TBD)

Program Essentials

[illegible]

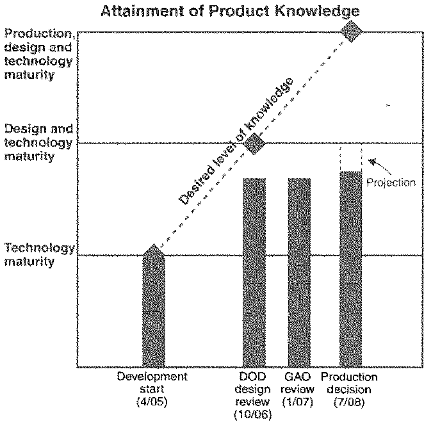
Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of [illegible]	Latest [illegible]	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]

Currently, two of Warrior's four critical technologies are mature. Although the remaining two technologies were immature in early 2006, the Army reports that they were nearing maturity as of the design review in late 2006. The Army anticipates that they will be mature by the time of the Warrior production start, currently scheduled for August 2008. While there are backup technologies available for both if they do not mature as the Army expects, these backups would result in a less capable Warrior system than the Army originally planned. The program office indicated that about 92 percent of the Warrior design drawings were released to manufacturing as of the design review.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



Warrior UAS Program

Technology Maturity

Two of Warrior's four critical technologies—the heavy fuel engine and the automatic takeoff and landing system—are considered to be mature. According to the program office, representative configurations of these two technologies have been integrated onto an unmanned aircraft. However, there is still some risk because neither the engine nor the complete takeoff and landing system have been integrated onto an unmanned aircraft using exactly the same configuration as planned for Warrior. Further, the Army reported that the engine requires some additional modification in order to perform at the flight altitudes planned for Warrior.

The two remaining critical technologies—the airborne ethernet and the multi-role tactical common data link—were not mature at the time the Army awarded the Warrior system development and demonstration contract in August 2005 and remained immature in early 2006. As of the design review in late 2006, the Army reported that they are nearing maturity and expects they will be fully mature by the time of the production start planned for August 2008. The airborne ethernet is expected to provide real-time communications capabilities among Warrior's internal aircraft components, including the avionics, payloads, and weapons. Similarly, the multirole tactical common data link is being developed to provide communications between Warrior aircraft and ground control stations as well as interoperability with other Army aviation platforms. While the contractor has integrated an airborne ethernet into an unmanned aircraft, neither it nor the data link has been integrated onto an umanned aircraft exactly as they are to be used on Warrior.

The Army has technologies in place as backups for the ethernet and data link, but these technologies would result in a less capable system than the Army originally planned. In particular, the backups for the data link suffer from slower data transmission rates or are not yet mature.

Design Stability

The Warrior program office stated that about 92 percent of the design drawings were released to manufacturing as of the design readiness review. In last year's assessment, the Army anticipated that the review would occur in June 2006. However, the review slipped until late 2006 as a result of the Army's decision to field an early model of the Warrior, known as Block 0.

Production Maturity

We could not assess Warrior's production maturity because the Warrior contractor does not use statistical process control as its metric. Instead, the contractor employs global technology standards per the International Standards Organization as its method for monitoring, controlling, and improving processes. The Warrior program office stated that this approach is acceptable to the Army because Warrior production is relatively low-volume and the contractor generally employs nearly 100 percent testing of all critical items. Since May 2006, Warrior's low-rate and full-rate production decision dates both have slipped by about 3 months due to the Army's decision to field the Block 0 version of Warrior.

Other Program Issues

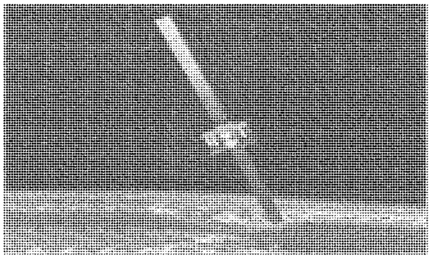
The Army expects to buy 1 developmental system with 17 aircraft and 11 complete production systems with a total of 132 production aircraft through 2015. However, the Army has not yet decided on the number of systems it might buy beyond that date.

Agency Comments

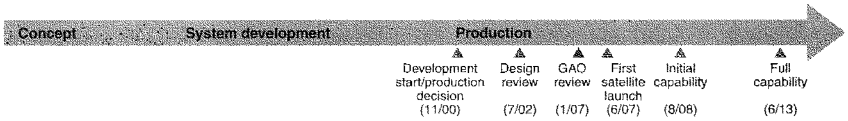
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Army provided updated program information as well as technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate. The program office also provided a more detailed description of the Warrior's planned capabilities and roles, including information on such characteristics as the aircraft system's control by division commander, payload flexibility, communications relay capability, ability to change missions in flight, and operation and maintenance by soldiers.

Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS)

WGS is a joint Air Force and Army program intended to provide essential communications services to U.S. warfighters, allies, and coalition partners during all levels of conflict short of nuclear war. It is the next generation wideband component in DOD's future Military Satellite Communications architecture and is composed of the following principal segments: space segment (satellites), terminal segment (users), and control segment (operators). We assessed the space segment.



Source: WGS Program Office.


Concept
System development
Production
Development start/production decision (11/00)
Design review (7/02)
GAO review (1/07)
First satellite launch (6/07)
Initial capability (8/08)
Full capability (6/13)

Program Essentials

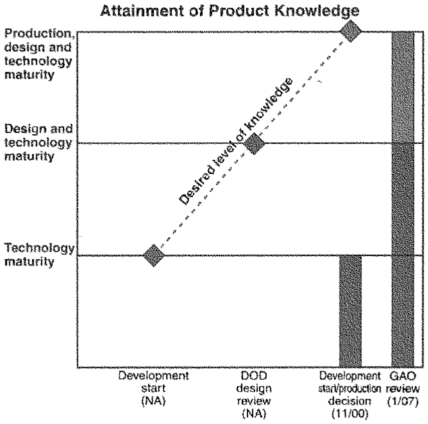
[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

	As of 11/2000	Latest 12/2006	Percent change
Research and development cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Procurement cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total program cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Program unit cost	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Total quantities	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Acquisition cycle time (months)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

The WGS program's technology and design are mature. We did not review production maturity data because of the commercial nature of the WGS acquisition contract, but unit-level manufacturing for WGS is complete. The program made progress in integrating and testing the first satellite, which is to be launched in June 2007. For example, rework on improperly installed fasteners is complete, contractors have redesigned computers to rectify data transmission errors, and environmental tests were successful. The Air Force is considering a three-block approach for WGS. Block 1 includes the first three satellites. Block 2 includes two satellites, with an unfunded option for a third satellite, which will transfer data at higher rates than those in the initial block. The Air Force has awarded a $1.07 billion contract for the Block 2 satellites and has begun studying the possibility of a WGS Block 3.

Attainment of Product Knowledge



WGS Program

Technology Maturity

WGS has two technologies that are vital to program success: the digital channelizer and the phased array antenna. According to program officials, both technologies were mature when the program made a production decision in November 2000.

Design Stability

The design for WGS is mature, as the program office has released all the expected drawings to manufacturing. Each of the initial three satellites is at some level of assembly, integration, or testing.

Production Maturity

The commercial nature of the WGS acquisition contract precludes the program office from having access to production process control data. Manufacturing processes for WGS are complete, as all units for the first satellite have been delivered.

Other Program Issues

The program made progress in integrating and testing the first satellite. For example, rework due to incorrect installation of fasteners is complete and the contractors have redesigned computers to correct data transmission errors. In addition, no significant problems were identified during space-like environmental testing or tests in which the contractors shook the satellite to simulate launch conditions and demonstrate the quality of workmanship on the satellite. During these tests, the program office also conducted low-level signal testing associated with satellite launch. Interoperability testing on the first satellite was completed in December 2006, in preparation for satellite launch, which is still scheduled for June 2007. Satellites 2 and 3 are to launch in December 2007 and May 2008, respectively.

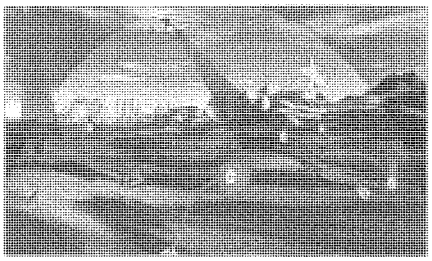
To address DOD's growing communication needs, the Air Force is considering a three-block approach for WGS. Block 1 includes the first three satellites. Block 2 includes satellites 4 and 5, with an unfunded option for satellite 6. These satellites will transfer data at higher rates than those in the initial block, and the Air Force has awarded a $1.07 billion contract for the three satellites. The Air Force also has begun studying the possibility of including enhanced capability in a WGS Block 3 for added airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance support.

Agency Comments

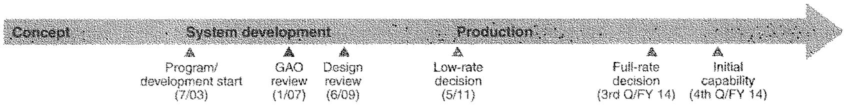
In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Air Force stated that in October 2006 it awarded a fixed price incentive fee with firm target contract to Boeing Satellite Systems for WGS satellites 4 and 5, with an unfunded option for WGS 6. The fourth and fifth satellites will complete the currently planned WGS constellation and will be modified to provide more capacity for airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance users.

Warfighter Information Network-Tactical (WIN-T)

WIN-T is the Army's high-speed and high-capacity backbone communications network. It is to provide reliable, secure, and seamless video, data, imagery, and voice services, allowing users to communicate simultaneously at various levels of security. WIN-T is to connect Army units with higher levels of command and provide Army's tactical portion of the Global Information Grid. In addition, it will provide key communications elements for the Army's Future Combat System (FCS), the linchpin of the transformation to a lighter, more capable force.



Source: PM WIN-T.


Concept
System development
Production
Program/ development start (7/03)
GAO review (1/07)
Design review (6/09)
Low-rate decision (5/11)
Full-rate decision (3rd Q/FY 14)
Initial capability (4th Q/FY 14)

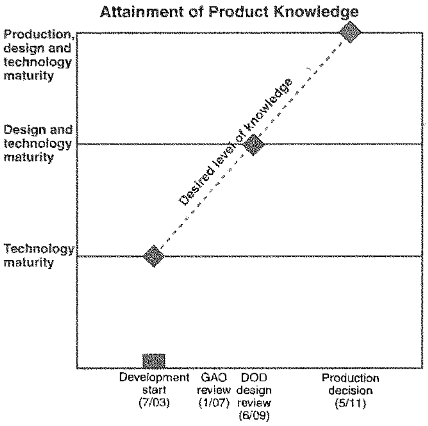
Program Essentials

[illegible]

Program Performance (fiscal year 2007 dollars in millions)

[illegible]

WIN-T is currently being restructured to meet emerging FCS requirements and a shift in the Army's funding priorities. The proposed restructuring will provide the program with more time to complete system development. WIN-T entered system development in August 2003 with 3 of its 12 critical technologies nearing maturity. According to the Army, a November 2005 developmental test/operational test demonstrated all of WIN-T's critical technologies in a relevant environment. In August, the Army completed a revised technology readiness assessment that supports the WIN-T program office's position. However, the Office of the Secretary of Defense did not fully concur with this assessment. While design stability is evaluated during WIN-T's design reviews, it cannot be assessed using our methodology because the program office does not track the number of releasable drawings.



WIN-T Program

Technology Maturity

WIN-T entered system development with 3 of its 12 critical technologies close to reaching full maturity. The program office maintains that the maturity of these technologies was demonstrated in a relevant environment during a November 2005 developmental test/operational test event. A March 2006 system assessment, prepared by the Army Test and Evaluation Command, concluded that a WIN-T prototype demonstrated the potential to provide communications both "on the move" and "at the halt" in a limited network. According to WIN-T program office and other Army representatives, this test event demonstrates the viability of the WIN-T system architecture and progress in maturing WIN-T's critical technologies. However, this test was limited in scope, and the system assessment report did not explicitly address the extent to which WIN-T's critical technologies had matured. In late August, to support WIN-T's restructuring, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology submitted a revised Technology Readiness Assessment to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, concurring that WIN-T's critical technologies had been demonstrated in a relevant environment. The Office of the Secretary of Defense's Director of Defense Research and Engineering did not concur with the Army's assessment for two of these technologies. In order to gain the Director's concurrence, the WIN-T program office is updating data to reaffirm its ratings for WIN-T's critical technologies and is submitting plans to achieve full technology maturity by the start of production.

Design Stability

Design stability could not be assessed because the program office does not plan to track the number of releasable drawings as a design metric. According to the program, WIN-T is not a manufacturing effort, but primarily an information technology system integration effort. Consequently, the government does not obtain releasable design drawings for many of WIN-T's components, particularly commercial components. Instead, design stability is evaluated at the preliminary and critical design reviews using the exit criteria developed by the government. According to DOD, the WIN-T design will evolve using performance-based specifications and open systems design and is to conform to an architecture that specifies the minimum set of standards and guidance for the acquisition of all DOD information systems.

Other Program Issues

The Army has also taken action to synchronize its FCS networking needs and WIN-T's planned capabilities, largely by restructuring the WIN-T program. The FCS program office led the Army's development of a study that examined ways to better synchronize the Army's communications programs, including WIN-T and FCS. The study concluded that the WIN-T program needed to make significant changes to both the hardware and software items it planned to deliver to FCS. For example, the size, weight, and power of the WIN-T elements that are needed to support FCS platforms had to be reduced significantly. These requirements were not part of the original WIN-T program, and, according to WIN-T program office representatives, additional time and funding will be required to address these new requirements. During this time, the Army was also looking for ways to address shortfalls in funding for high-priority items needed to support the Global War on Terrorism. To fund these shortfalls, the Army proposed cutting $655 million from WIN-T for fiscal years 2007 through 2011, which DOD approved. Recognizing that WIN-T could no longer be executed within its established costs and schedule, the Army determined that the program needed to be restructured.

The Army's proposed restructuring of WIN-T would extend the program's development for about 5 years, and thereby delay the production decision from 2006 until 2011. DOD intends to complete a program review in the third quarter of fiscal year 2007 for which the Army must prepare a revised acquisition strategy, cost estimate, and technology assessment. On November 6, 2006, the Joint Requirements Oversight Council approved the WIN-T Capability Development Document.

Agency Comments

In commenting on a draft of this assessment, the Army provided technical comments, which were incorporated as appropriate.

Agency Comments

DOD did not provide general comments on a draft of this report, but did provide technical comments. These comments, along with agency comments received on the individual assessments, were included as appropriate. (See app. I for a copy of DOD's response).

Scope of Our Review

For the 62 programs, each assessment provides the historical and current program status and offers the opportunity to take early corrective action when a program's projected attainment of knowledge diverges significantly from the best practices. The assessments also identify programs that are employing practices worthy of emulation by other programs. If a program is attaining the desired levels of knowledge, it has less risk—but not zero risk—of future problems. Likewise, if a program shows a gap between demonstrated knowledge and best practices, it indicates an increased risk—not a guarantee—of future problems. The real value of the assessments is in recognizing gaps early, which provides opportunities for constructive intervention—such as adjustments to schedule, trade-offs in requirements, and additional funding—before cost and schedule consequences mount.

We selected programs for the assessments based on several factors, including (1) high dollar value, (2) stage in acquisition, and (3) congressional interest. The majority of the 62 programs covered in this report are considered major defense acquisition programs by DOD. A program is defined as major if its estimated research and development costs exceed $365 million or its procurement costs exceed $2.19 billion in fiscal year 2000 constant dollars.

We are sending copies of this report to interested congressional committees; the Secretary of Defense; the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force; and the Director, Office of Management and Budget. We will also make copies available to others upon request. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on the GAO Web site at http://www.gao.gov.

If you have any questions on this report, please contact me at (202) 512-4841. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. Major contributors to this report are listed in appendix IV.

Paul L. Francis

Paul L. Francis
Director
Acquisition and Sourcing Management

List of Congressional Committees

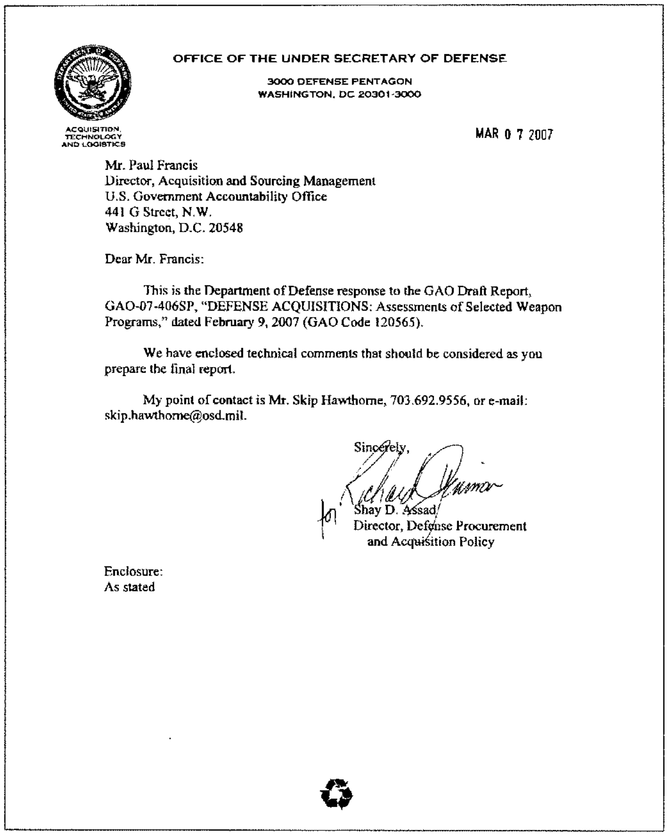
The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman
The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
The Honorable Ted Stevens
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman
The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

The Honorable John P. Murtha, Jr.
Chairman
The Honorable C.W. Bill Young
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives

Comments from the Department of Defense



OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

MAR 0 7 2007

Mr. Paul Francis
Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Francis:

This is the Department of Defense response to the GAO Draft Report, GAO-07-406SP, "DEFENSE ACQUISITIONS: Assessments of Selected Weapon Programs," dated February 9, 2007 (GAO Code 120565).

We have enclosed technical comments that should be considered as you prepare the final report.

My point of contact is Mr. Skip Hawthorne, 703.692.9556, or e-mail: skip.hawthorne@osd.mil.

Sincerely,

Shay D. Assad
Director, Defense Procurement
and Acquisition Policy

Enclosure:
As stated

Scope and Methodology

In conducting our work, we evaluated performance and risk data from each of the programs included in this report. We summarized our assessments of each individual program in two components—a system profile and a product knowledge assessment. We did not validate the data provided by the Department of Defense (DOD). However, we took several steps to address data quality. Specifically, we reviewed the data and performed various quality checks, which revealed some discrepancies in the data. We discussed the underlying data and these discrepancies with program officials and adjusted the data accordingly. We determined that the data provided by DOD were sufficiently reliable for our engagement purposes after reviewing DOD's management controls for assessing data reliability.

Macro Analysis

Data for the total planned investment of major defense acquisition programs were obtained from funding stream data included in DOD's Selected Acquisition Reports (SAR) or from data obtained directly from the program offices and then aggregated across all programs in base year 2007 dollars.

The number of weapon systems in development for the 2003 and 2007 assessment periods encompasses all programs with SARs on December 31, 2001, (2003 assessment period) and December 31, 2005, (2007 assessment period) with the exception of the Ballistic Missile Defense System and the Chemical Demilitarization programs.

The data presented in figure 2 on page 6 were obtained from table 6-1 "Department of Defense Total Obligational Authority by Title, Constant fiscal year 2007 Dollars" in the National Defense Budget Estimates for fiscal year 2007. Likewise, the data presented in table 2 were drawn from table 6-1, "Department of Defense Total Obligational Authority by Title, Constant fiscal year 2007 Dollars" in the National Defense Budget Estimates for fiscal year 2007. The average annual real growth rate was calculated using the compound annual growth rate formula.

To assess the total cost growth of major weapon systems between 2004 and 2007 presented on page 8, we identified the common set of 64 major defense acquisition programs since 2004, with the exception of the Ballistic Missile Defense System and the Chemical Demilitarization programs. Figures for the total cost of these programs were obtained from funding stream data included in SARs or from data acquired directly from the program offices, and then aggregated across all programs in base year 2007 dollars for the 2004 and 2007 assessment periods. To calculate the average annual rate of cost growth for this common set of programs, we applied the compound annual growth rate formula using the total funding data points for assessment periods 2004 and 2007.

To assess the total cost, schedule, and quantity changes of the programs included in our assessment presented in table 3 and on page 9, it was necessary to identify those programs with all of the requisite data available. Of the 62 programs in our assessment, 27 constituted the common set of programs where data were available for cost, schedule, and quantity at the first full estimate, generally milestone B, and the latest estimate. We excluded programs that had planning estimates as their first full estimate and if the first full estimate and latest estimate fell within a 1-year period of each other. Data utilized in this analysis were drawn from information contained in SARs or data provided by program offices as of January 15, 2007. We summed the costs associated with research, development, test and evaluation (RDT&E) and total costs consisting of RDT&E, procurement, military construction, and acquisition operation and maintenance. The schedule assessment is based on the change in the average acquisition cycle time, defined as the number of months between program start and the achievement of initial operation capability or an equivalent fielding date.

The weighted calculations of acquisition cycle time and program acquisition unit cost for the common set of programs were derived by taking the total cost estimate for each of the 27 programs and dividing it by the aggregate total cost of all 27 programs in the common set. The resulting quotient for each program was then multiplied by the simple percentage change in program acquisition unit costs to obtain the weighted unit cost change of each program. Next, the sum of this weighted cost change for all programs was calculated to get the weighted unit cost change for the common set as a whole. To assess the weighted average acquisition cycle time change, we multiplied the weight calculation by the acquisition cycle time estimate for each corresponding program. A simple average was then taken to calculate the change between the first full estimate and the latest estimate. We believe these calculations best represent the overall progress of programs by placing them within the context of the common set's aggregate cost.

To assess the percentage of programs with technology maturity, design stability, and production maturity at each key juncture presented in figure 3 and figure 5 and on pages 14 and 17, we identified programs that had actually proceeded through each key juncture—development start, system design review, and production start—and obtained their assessed maturity. The percentages in figures 3, 4, and 5 on pages 14, 15, and 17 include programs in the 2007 assessment only. The population size for the technology maturity at development start is 37 programs, design review is 25 programs, and production start is 18 programs. The population size for the design stability at design review is 22 programs, and 12 programs at production start. The population size for production maturity at production start is 20 programs. This information was drawn from data provided by the program office as of January 15, 2007. For more information, see the product knowledge assessment section in this appendix.

Data on the date each program plans to conduct development tests of a production representative article (i.e., prototype) was obtained from program offices, and was then compared to the scheduled production decision. The population size for this analysis is 32 programs.

System Profile Data on Each Individual Two-Page Assessment

In the past 6 years, DOD has revised its policies governing weapon system acquisitions and changed the terminology used for major acquisition events. To make DOD's acquisition terminology more consistent across the 62 program assessments, we standardized the terminology for key program events. In the individual program assessments, "program start" refers to the initiation of a program; DOD usually refers to program start as milestone I or milestone A, which begins the concept and technology development phase. Similarly, "development start" refers to the commitment to system development that coincides with either milestone II or milestone B, which begins DOD's system development and demonstration phase. The "production decision" generally refers to the decision to enter the production and deployment phase, typically with low-rate initial production. Initial capability refers to the initial operational capability, sometimes also called first unit equipped or required asset availability. For shipbuilding programs, the schedule of key program events in relation to milestones varies for each individual program. Our assessments of shipbuilding programs report key program events as determined by each program's individual strategy. For the Missile Defense Agency programs that do not follow the standard Department of Defense acquisition model, but instead develop systems in incremental capability-based blocks, we identified the key technology development efforts that lead to an initial capability for the block assessed.

The information presented on the funding needed to complete from fiscal year 2007 through completion, unless otherwise noted, draws on information from SARs or on data from the program office. In some instances the data were not yet available, and we annotate this by the term "to be determined" (TBD), or "not applicable," annotated (NA). The quantities listed refer only to procurement quantities. Satellite programs, in particular, produce a large percentage of their total operational units as development quantities, which are not included in the quantity figure.

To assess the cost, schedule, and quantity changes of each program, we reviewed DOD's SARs or obtained data directly from the program offices. In general, we compared the latest available SAR information with a baseline for each program. For programs that have started product development—those that are beyond milestone II or B—we compared the latest available SAR to the development estimate from the first selected acquisition report issued after the program was approved to enter development. For systems that have not yet started system development, we compared the latest available data to the planning estimate issued after milestone I or A. For systems not included in SARs, we attempted to obtain comparable baseline and current data from the individual program offices. For MDA systems for which a baseline was not available, we compared the latest available cost information to the amount reported last year.

All cost information is presented in base year 2007 dollars using Office of the Secretary of Defense-approved deflators to eliminate the effects of inflation. We have depicted only the programs' main elements of acquisition cost—research and development and procurement. However, the total program costs also include military construction and acquisition operation and maintenance costs. Because of rounding and these additional costs, in some situations the total cost may not match the exact sum of the research and development and procurement costs. The program unit costs are calculated by dividing the total program cost by the total quantities planned. These costs are often referred to as program acquisition unit costs. In some instances, the data were not applicable, and we annotate this by using the term "NA." In other instances, the current absence of data on procurement funding and quantities precludes calculation of a meaningful program acquisition unit cost, and we annotate this by using the term "TBD." The quantities listed refer to total quantities, including both procurement and development quantities.

The schedule assessment is based on acquisition cycle time, defined as the number of months between the program start, usually milestone I or A, and the achievement of initial operational capability or an equivalent fielding date. In some instances, the data were not yet available, and we annotate this by using the term "TBD," or were classified.

The intent of these comparisons is to provide an aggregate or overall picture of a program's history. These assessments represent the sum total of the federal government's actions on a program, not just those of the program manager and the contractor. DOD does a number of detailed analyses of changes that attempt to link specific changes with triggering events or causes. Our analysis does not attempt to make such detailed distinctions.

Product Knowledge Data on Each Individual Two-Page Assessment

To assess the product development knowledge of each program at key points in development, we submitted a data collection instrument to each program office. The results are graphically depicted in each two-page assessment. We also reviewed pertinent program documentation, such as the operational requirements document, the acquisition program baseline, test reports, and major program reviews.

To assess technology maturity, we asked program officials to apply a tool, referred to as technology readiness levels, for our analysis. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration originally developed technology readiness levels, and the Army and Air Force science and technology research organizations use them to determine when technologies are ready to be handed off from science and technology managers to product developers. Technology readiness levels are measured on a scale of 1 to 9, beginning with paper studies of a technology's feasibility and culminating with a technology fully integrated into a completed product. (See app. III for the definitions of technology readiness levels.) Our best practices work has shown that a technology readiness level of 7—demonstration of a technology in a realistic environment—is the level of technology maturity that constitutes a low risk for starting a product development program. In our assessment, the technologies that have reached technology readiness level 7, a prototype demonstrated in a realistic environment, are referred to as mature or fully mature and those that have reached technology readiness level 6, a prototype demonstrated in a relevant environment, are referred to as approaching or nearing maturity and are assessed as attaining 50 percent of the desired level of knowledge. Satellite technologies that have achieved technology readiness level 6 are assessed as fully mature due to the difficulty of demonstrating maturity in an operational environment—space.

In most cases, we did not validate the program offices' selection of critical technologies or the determination of the demonstrated level of maturity. We sought to clarify the technology readiness levels in those cases where information existed that raised concerns. If we were to conduct a detailed review, we might adjust the critical technologies assessed, the readiness level demonstrated, or both. It was not always possible to reconstruct the technological maturity of a weapon system at key decision points after the passage of many years.

To assess design stability, we asked program officials to provide the percentage of engineering drawings completed or projected for completion by the design review, the production decision, and as of our current assessment. In most cases, we did not verify or validate the percentage of engineering drawings provided by the program office. We sought to clarify the percentage of drawings completed in those cases where information existed that raised concerns. Completed engineering drawings were defined as the number of drawings released or deemed releasable to manufacturing that can be considered the "build-to" drawings.

To assess production maturity, we asked program officials to identify the number of critical manufacturing processes and, where available, to quantify the extent of statistical control achieved for those processes. In most cases, we did not verify or validate this information provided by the program office. We sought to clarify the number of critical manufacturing processes and percentage of statistical process control where information existed that raised concerns. We used a standard called the Process Capability Index, which is a process performance measurement that quantifies how closely a process is running to its specification limits. The index can be translated into an expected product defect rate, and we have found it to be a best practice. We sought other data, such as scrap and rework trends, in those cases where quantifiable statistical control data were unavailable.

Although the knowledge points provide excellent indicators of potential risks, by themselves, they do not cover all elements of risk that a program encounters during development, such as funding instability. Our detailed reviews on individual systems normally provide for a fuller treatment of risk elements.

Appendix III

Technology Readiness Levels

Technology Readiness Level	Description	Hardware Software	Demonstration Environment
1. Basic principles observed and reported.	Lowest level of technology readiness. Scientific research begins to be translated into applied research and development. Examples might include paper studies of a technology's basic properties	None (paper studies and analysis)	None
2. Technology concept and/or application formulated.	Invention begins. Once basic principles are observed, practical applications can be invented. The application is speculative and there is no proof or detailed analysis to support the assumption. Examples are still limited to paper studies.	None (paper studies and analysis)	None
3. Analytical and experimental critical function and/or characteristic proof of concept.	Active research and development is initiated. This includes analytical studies and laboratory studies to physically validate analytical predictions of separate elements of the technology. Examples include components that are not yet integrated or representative.	Analytical studies and demonstration of nonscale individual components (pieces of subsystem).	Lab
4. Component and/or breadboard. Validation in laboratory environment.	Basic technological components are integrated to establish that the pieces will work together. This is relatively "low fidelity" compared to the eventual system. Examples include integration of "ad hoc" hardware in a laboratory.	Low-fidelity breadboard. Integration of nonscale components to show pieces will work together. Not fully functional or form or fit but representative of technically feasible approach suitable for flight articles.	Lab
5. Component and/or breadboard validation in relevant environment.	Fidelity of breadboard technology increases significantly. The basic technological components are integrated with reasonably realistic supporting elements so that the technology can be tested in a simulated environment. Examples include "high fidelity" laboratory integration of components.	High-fidelity breadboard. Functionally equivalent but not necessarily form and/or fit (size, weight, materials, etc.). Should be approaching appropriate scale. May include integration of several components with reasonably realistic support elements/subsystems to demonstrate functionality.	Lab demonstrating functionality but not form and fit. May include flight demonstrating breadboard in surrogate aircraft. Technology ready for detailed design studies.

(Continued From Previous Page)

Technology Readiness Level	Description	Hardware Software	Demonstration Environment
6. System/subsystem model or prototype demonstration in a relevant environment.	Representative model or prototype system, which is well beyond the breadboard tested for TRL 5, is tested in a relevant environment. Represents a major step up in a technology's demonstrated readiness. Examples include testing a prototype in a high-fidelity laboratory environment or in simulated realistic environment.	Prototype—Should be very close to form, fit, and function. Probably includes the integration of many new components and realistic supporting elements/subsystems if needed to demonstrate full functionality of the subsystem.	High-fidelity lab demonstration or limited/restricted flight demonstration for a relevant environment. Integration of technology is well defined.
7. System prototype demonstration in a realistic environment.	Prototype near or at planned operational system. Represents a major step up from TRL 6, requiring the demonstration of an actual system prototype in a realistic environment, such as in an aircraft, vehicle, or space. Examples include testing the prototype in a test bed aircraft.	Prototype. Should be form, fit, and function integrated with other key supporting elements/subsystems to demonstrate full functionality of subsystem.	Flight demonstration in representative realistic environment such as flying test bed or demonstrator aircraft. Technology is well substantiated with test data.
8. Actual system completed and "flight qualified" through test and demonstration.	Technology has been proven to work in its final form and under expected conditions. In almost all cases, this TRL represents the end of true system development. Examples include developmental test and evaluation of the system in its intended weapon system to determine if it meets design specifications.	Flight-qualified hardware	Developmental Test and Evaluation (DT&E) in the actual system application
9. Actual system "flight proven" through successful mission operations.	Actual application of the technology in its final form and under mission conditions, such as those encountered in operational test and evaluation. In almost all cases, this is the end of the last "bug fixing" aspects of true system development. Examples include using the system under operational mission conditions.	Actual system in final form	Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E) in operational mission conditions

Source: GAO and its analysis of National Aeronautics and Space Administration data.

GAO Contact and Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

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Acknowledgments

Ridge C. Bowman, Alan R. Frazier, Jordan Hamory, and Bruce H. Thomas made key contributions to this report. Other key contributors included David B. Best, Beverly A. Breen, Maricela Cherveny, Thomas J. Denomme, Arthur Gallegos, William R. Graveline, David J. Hand, Barbara H. Haynes, Michael J. Hazard, Ivy G. Hubler, Judy T. Lasley, Matthew B. Lea, Diana L. Moldafsky, Brian T. Mullins, John E. Oppenheim, Kenneth E. Patton, Charles W. Perdue, Michael J. Sullivan, Robert S. Swierczek, Adam Vodraska, Viraphonh Vongvanith, and Karen S. Zuckerstein.

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Active Electronically Scanned Array Radar (AESA)	Joseph E. Dewechter/Jerry W. Clark
Airborne Mine Countermeasures (AMCM)	Christopher R. Durbin/ Moshe Schwartz
Advance Precision Kill Weapon System II (APKWS)	Michele R. Williamson/ Wendy P. Smythe
Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter (ARH)	Michael J. Hesse/Tana M. Davis
Advanced Threat Infrared Countermeasure/Common Missile Warning System (ATIRCM/CMWS)	Danny G. Owens
B-2 Radar Modernization Program (B-2 RMP)	Don M. Springman/Andrew H. Redd
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C-130 Avionics Modernization Program (C-130 AMP)	Sean D. Merrill /Marvin E. Bonner
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Source: GAO.

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